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THE LESSON OF FRANCE

THE armistice terms which the unhappy Marshal Pétain has accepted mean the complete subjugation of France. They take from her every possibility of future resistance and she must hereafter bow to the conqueror's will, when the time comes for him to impose it. This procedure reveals the political instinct that Hitler never lacks. The French population must now feel relief mingled with humiliation, but it does not yet know what losses of territory and what utter loss of freedom the two conquerors will seek to inflict. A phrase in the clause which added the Atlantic Coast to the territory already occupied by the Germans, implies that some ports or positions along it may be permanently retained. For the rest, the demobilisation of the army and the surrender of all arms was to have been expected.

In two particulars Marshal Pétain's Government has fallen below any standard of honour. "Honour" is a much abused word; it is not dishonourable to lay down your arms in a hopeless situation. But what other word than dishonour can be applied to an agreement to hand over to the Nazis the refugees to whom France has given protection? That may involve a massacre of some of the noblest men and women in Europe. With the Spaniards, who may soon find themselves in the same case, these militant fugitives from Fascism number several hundred thousands. The other act of dishonour affects us as the allies of France. Mr. Churchill, when at last he had to face the fact that the French were incapable of further effective resistance on their own home soil, agreed to release them from their pledge to conclude no separate peace, if they would first send the French fleet to British ports. For this there was time enough. But Marshal Pétain has consented to hand over his ships to the enemy, to be disarmed and interned under their keeping. This is in words a promise that these ships shall not be used against ourselves, and Italy's terms even undertake that she will not retain them after the peace. But of what value is Hitler's word? This document expressly authorises him to impose harsher terms, if he can plead that the French have not kept their side of the bargain. Moreover, he is permitted to use French mine-sweepers and small craft, as he can use French ports and merchant ships, in his operations against our coasts. The embitterment of Anglo-French relations is among the worst dangers that confront us; none the less, it is on record that Marshal Pétain has done what he has done.

What in fact will happen to the French fleet we do not yet know. Its officers and crews are men of spirit, but can they be so sure of the ultimate victory of our country over a whole continent, that they will face a life of exile and sever themselves from their families, perhaps for ever? There is some reason to believe that the French Empire will fight on, with General de Noguès leading its forces in North Africa and General Mittelhauser in Syria. The Italians have of course demanded the demilitarisation of Bizerta, Oran and the fortified zone on the frontiers of Tunis and Libya. If the armies and ships on the spot resist, there still remains a refuge and a base from which a free France will resist. From Beyrout to Casablanca a front will still exist. In this perplexed situation Spain may play a big and unwelcome part. The Turks may conceivably give some help in Syria, but India, if we had won her, would be on this front the most trusty ally.

The Government has declared its astonishment at the terms accepted by Marshal Pétain. Most people share this astonishment, because even now it is not generally understood that this is a social as well as a national war. The extreme difficulty of interpreting and dealing with the world's problems in recent years has been this confusion of the national and social forces at work. It has not been true that there was a clear cut issue between Fascism and Communism or between democracy and totalitarianism or even between warlike and peaceful states. The ideologies are mixed. If during the war itself we have all been driven at times to talk of Britain and France and other countries as if they were simple entities, that is because

Hitler has succeeded in his own country, not in solving the social problem but in destroying it and, for the effective purpose of war, forcing Germany to act as a single machine. In France, after the moment of apparent unity when the spirit of historic France rose to meet the invader, the fundamental disunities which had long bewildered the country came again to the surface. The men who have finally made peace with Hitler were Frenchmen who no doubt cared for the independence of the soil of France. Their mistaken notion of saving France was an alliance with Mussolini and General Franco. France to them meant primarily their propertied position and what they feared most was Communism. On this point competent British and French observers of very different political outlook, who have returned from Paris in the last few days, agree. General Weygand and Marshal Pétain had always been men of the extreme Right; M. Flandin has long been pro-Nazi and M. Laval is a dishonest politician who began the rot in France in 1935 and who has long worked for the entry of France into a Fascist alliance. At the other end of the social scale there are masses of French workers and peasants, whose hatred of war, in which they would be the greatest sufferers, was even greater than M. Laval's. Between these two class groups there have been innumerable bewildered people, mainly wanting a quiet life, but prepared if necessary to fight for French independence. In such a social conflict a mere appeal to the traditions, grandeur and historical achievements of France was still powerful but no longer an adequate unifying force.

The lesson for Britain seems clear enough. Beneath our surface unity there is a complex situation. Young Conservative M.P.s are at one with Labour members and service officers in a bitter resentment at the lack of equipment experienced in the field and at the past incompetence and lack of leadership which has brought us to our present state. They have with them a large part of the B.E.F. Amongst the ranks of Labour there is much pride that Mr. Attlee, Mr. Bevin, Mr. Morrison and others, have at last achieved posts of great responsibility, but everywhere there are complaints about such matters as the failure to organise, the luxury of the rich and the retention of the profit incentive which the present Excess Profits Tax in fact barely touches. It is astonishing how vehemently many managers, technicians and business men now support these popular complaints. Why, workers and managers alike ask, should factories still be working only one shift or producing unnecessary luxuries? Shop stewards from more than one establishment have sent deputations to Westminster to protest against being kept on unimportant work despite the evident suitability of their factories for urgently needed products. The new Government is an immense improvement on the last; it brought new hope and it has done much reorganisation. Its formation was the first stage of a democratic revolution; the time has come for the next phase.

It is not too late for this Government which contains men of imagination, courage and drive to save us from the fate of France. The wireless has not been used as it could have been to explain what has happened in France to make the necessary transformation, and to produce a dynamic capable of canalising this natural and proper dissatisfaction. To tell us about the Armada and the thwarted efforts of Napoleon is not to reassure us. We all know that to-day we may be attacked from many points, that Ireland may be invaded and that the invasion may be coupled with the arrival of troops from the air. A far larger proportion of the population should be given its chance to defend its soil. The Government should publicly admit the mistakes of the past and explain how it proposes to remedy them. It should profit by the experience of France and get rid of men in civil service and other official positions who have failed in the past and who are liable, if France is any guide, to break down when danger approaches. The Home Office should turn its attention from the hunt for the Fifth Column amongst those refugees who have risked their lives in the struggle against Hitler and look into the activities of persons whose position in society may tempt them to play the part of the betrayers of France. This should be done quietly and without recrimination and without public scandal. We want no blood sacrifice, no focuses of hate. We have to remember Hitler's words that he never fights a war unless he has won it already. We have still to create our own dynamic. It must be social as well as national. Everywhere the aim should be to produce co-operation between the people and the authorities, to organise camps, communal feeding schemes, health-centres, and farm colonies in joint popular and governmental hands, remembering the deep resentment growing in the country against the county, the squirearchy, and the old school tie. British democracy is not corrupt as French democracy was. But let us not once more make the mistake of saying that "it can't happen here."

India in the War

In the new phase of the war India may soon be a pivot of our defences. The Indian army is about to be greatly increased and this will involve recruitment far outside the restricted strata of the population hitherto cherished for this purpose. The Mahrattas are an obvious source of man-power, but they are under Congress influence. It is clear even to the bureaucracy that India will not throw her weight on to the British side unless it is also her side. Congress is at last alive to India's military danger, for it has formally thrown over Mr. Gandhi's pacifism in the matter of external defence. Mr. Amery, alive to this situation, has authorised a new approach to the leaders of the two rival organisations, and Lord Linlithgow is again interviewing Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah. For our own part we think him far too rigid for these delicate negotiations, and we could wish that Mr. Amery, who has both personality and imagination, would himself fly to India and take charge. But the first move in our view must come from Britain. It is too late to achieve anything by promises of Dominion status. We ought to grant it. We would repeat our former suggestion, that Parliament should by resolution straightway recognise India as a Dominion, and accord to some body of India's elected representatives, however they may be chosen, the right to determine its future constitution, subject to ratification at Westminster within a year of the end of the war. That formula would allow us to negotiate over the necessary transitional arrangements. If we made this firm declaration now, Indians could be called to the Viceroy's Council and self-government might be resumed in the Congress provinces. Congress, however, would be wise to offer some more ministerial posts to Muslims: this feud was always largely a question of jobs. If Mr. Jinnah still opposed, he would find himself isolated.

Russia Takes Precautions

The Propaganda Board of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. has issued an important statement explaining in detail Stalin's recent pronouncement on "the gradual transition to a Communist society." The Board is anxious to relieve anxieties that any new drastic change of line is intended. "No revolutionary upheavals," it states reassuringly, "are to be expected in the U.S.S.R. in the near future." The Communist leadership, unlike the Utopians, invent nothing; their policy issues out of the facts and their ideology is always adjusted to public opinion. The Propaganda Board then lays down three principles of policy which are to be considered as pre-requisites to the realisation of Communism: first, to strengthen the military power of the State and in the first instance to create a powerful army; secondly, to educate the people to patriotism and self-sacrifice for the country and thirdly to liquidate class-struggle and unify Soviet society. This statement of policy reaffirms in emphatic terms the line of policy which Stalin has been developing for many years. It rejects as Utopian all considerations of world-revolution or of drastic social changes inside the U.S.S.R., and concentrates upon the strengthening and defence of the Socialist Fatherland. In domestic and in foreign policy alike, Stalins' paramount aim now is the conservation of the Rssian State.u The realisation of Communism, he believes, depends upon the survival of the U.S.S.R. (under Stalinist control) and this in turn depends on the creation of a boundless patriotism among the masses and the strengthening of the Red Army. Several decrees relating to the Defence Commissariat and issued during May exemplify this tendency. Over a hundred new generals and thousands of senior officers have been appointed in addition to four Field-Marshals. New titles have also been introduced for the higher ranks of the Red Army. Comrade-Divisional and Brigade Commanders now become Major and Lieutenant Generals; and a new rank of "General Commander" of the Red Army and Fleet has been created. Commenting on the Decrees, *Pravda* writes:

What is the significance, what is the purpose of the introduction of new titles for the higher personnel of the Red Army and Navy? The purpose is to raise the prestige of our senior officers still higher, and to strengthen military discipline. The supreme authority of the commander of a military unit, land, air or naval, is clearly expressed in the title of general or admiral.

From the rank and file to the highest commander, the Red Army and Navy are flesh of the flesh and bone of the bone of the people. It is only natural that the army and the navy in the Soviet Union should enjoy the love, confidence and solicitude of the whole country. That is why our people welcome any measure which enhances the prestige of the officer and, consequently, strengthens the discipline and fighting capacity of the Red Army. A general of the Red Army or an admiral of the Red Navy is a leader enjoying supreme authority and vested with high trust by the Socialist state.

The time has long been ripe for the introduction of the titles of general and admiral in the Red Army and Navy. Their institution at this point is the culminating link in a chain of measures for the organisational consolidation of the armed forces of the Soviet Union.

The titles of general and admiral will play an important role in enhancing further military discipline and the prestige of the higher military commanders.

Honour and glory to the army and navy leaders of the Sovietland—to the marshals, generals and admirals, commanders enjoying supreme authority!

The introduction of new military titles for the higher commanding personnel of the army and navy will serve to raise the defence might of the Soviet state, for it will contribute to the strengthening of discipline. That is why the Soviet people so joyfully acclaim this measure, which is directed toward consolidating the supreme authority and prestige of our marshals, generals and admirals.

The revival of the old Slav patriotism also continues. Reluctantly, but purposely, the Soviet press has therefore reintroduced the "dear fatherland" motive in its agitation. The glory of the past and the achievements of the Russian arms and Russian military leaders are brought back to the conscience of the people.

Tzar Peter the Great, the creator of Greater Russia, Field-Marshal Souvorin, the patriotic military leader, Field-Marshal Koutousoff, the hero of the Napoleonic war, and others were accordingly converted from "forces of reaction" into advance forces of progress and builders of New Russia. The 140th anniversary of Field-Marshal Souvoroff was recently celebrated in Moscow with great pomp and the official organ of the Red Army, *The Red Star*, wrote:

The Russian people knows how to wage war and knows the customs of war. This is one of our qualities which has remained unchanged from ancient times. The Russian people has had to conduct heroic campaigns against enemies of the Fatherland. The Soviet Red Army maintains the age long tradition of the Russian people. Particularly it remembers well and esteems highly the military leader Souvoroff. The Red Army wishes to be worthy of Souvoroff.

Patriotic songs and military plays, historical military exhibitions, proud references to the success of the Russian arms in the past are features of present-day life in Soviet Russia. Military activities occupy the foremost place in the life of the country. The Army and its leaders are becoming extremely popular. The reintroduction of titles in the Red Army represents the new tendency towards re-establishment of the old order of things and the strengthening of internal discipline. It is to some extent the return to the glory of Imperial Russia.

Stalin's domestic policy is to create a strong, "monolithic," authoritarian, patriotic State: his foreign policy therefore is bound to be equally realistic and opposed to all Utopian ideas, including that of risking the security of the U.S.S.R. for any ideological considerations. Indeed it would not be unwise to assume that it would run along the same lines as that of any Republican who might succeed President Roosevelt. Basically isolationist in temper, Stalin is shrewd enough to see that complete isolation is not practical politics, and that a victorious Germany would be an immediate menace to Russian security. On the other hand, were Germany victorious Russia would be compelled to try to come to some arrangement with her; and for this reason Stalin will not identify himself with British resistance to Hitler, unless he has overwhelming reason to believe, first, that resistance will be more determined than that of France and, secondly, that the British Government is prepared to take those revolutionary measures which could undermine the Nazi domination of Europe. In brief, though Stalin is intensely conservative at home, he would welcome an anti-Nazi revolution in Europe and even give it cautious assistance, provided that the U.S.S.R. was not directly implicated. Meanwhile, he strengthens his western defences by the occupation of the Baltic States and by massing his armies on the Bessarabian frontier. At the worst he may have to do a deal with Hitler, but if he is forced to do so, he is determined to negotiate after and not before he has strengthened his position in the Balkans.

More Chickens Home to Roost

The Japanese see that their moment is ripe. France defeated, they demanded that the Pétain Government should cease to allow the railways of Indo-China to carry arms to China. Not content with the submission of the Bordeaux Ministry, they demanded a Japanese inspectorate in Indo-China to see that their will was carried out. Next comes the turn of Britain. Sir James Craigie, who seems always to have believed in the goodwill of Japan to Britain—or at least to British Big Business—was then informed by the Japanese that Great Britain must stop the traffic on the Burma-Yunnan road. So far the British Government, which now knows the fatal results of yielding bit by bit to Japan and which would prefer not to let China down, has not replied. Japan promptly increases the pressure by moving troops to threaten Hong Kong and prepares to blockade the neighbouring coast. Hong Kong and the great financial interests on the Yangtse have long been hostages which Japan could use when Britain was in difficulties. The story of Japanese-British relations is exactly parallel with that of Italian-British relations. Sir John Simon and the Tory majority in the House destroyed the League and broke faith with China in 1931 in the hope of buying Japan's good will to Britain. Since the great Chinese-Japanese war that began three years ago, the British Government has continued to curry favour with Japan. To-day Britain and France are no longer Great Powers in the Far East; and China, unbroken by Japan, is threatened with the blockade of that back-door through which her essential supplies have been sent. We can no longer talk big to Japan; we cannot, in any case, defend Hong Kong if the Japanese intend to take it. We can, however, refuse to allow it to be used for purposes of blackmail, and we are under no compulsion to close the Burma road to China.

Overseas Evacuation of Children

The Government scheme has made considerable progress between June 9th and June 19th. A new organisation has been set up, with an executive committee composed of four civil servants, one representative of Messrs. Cook's and the Minister. There is also an Advisory Committee of twenty-five, representing different organisations in this country and the Dominions which are concerned with emigration, including religious bodies. In the House of Commons, the announcement of the Advisory Committee caused a good deal of derision, but the Minister made it clear that its functions are purely advisory. The children are to be divided into two categories, those from grant-aided, elementary, secondary, and technical schools; and those from public and preparatory schools. The Dominions have agreed that the medical examination should be held in London, so that there shall be no question of any child being turned back when he reaches his destination. Special organisations are also being set up to feed and clothe the children before they leave England. The parents here can nominate the families or places they want their children to go to if they have friends; otherwise the Committee will make the best possible arrangements for them. First preference is given to children from dangerous areas, and second preference to children whose parents have already begun to make arrangements to evacuate them. We would wish to make two suggestions. In the first place, it seems to us a point of national honour that German and Austrian children should not be excluded from the scheme. At present Czechoslovak citizens are accepted, but the German refugee children, whose custody we voluntarily accepted, are not. Secondly, even greater precautions should be taken to ensure that the evacuation does not create class-suspicion. If miners, farmers and other professions and trades in the Dominions would follow the example of the Universities in offering hospitality to children of their British colleagues this task would be made vastly easier.

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SUPPLYING THE FORTRESS

WE are now a fortress, and shall shortly be beleaguered : yet we retain the economic and industrial organisation of a nation, prosperous enough to afford inefficiency and secure from all attacks. To say this is not to disparage the work of Mr. Bevin and Mr. Morrison. Taking over from their predecessors an unplanned war-economy, they have appealed to the workers to increase output to maximum capacity.

But such an effort must be short-lived, unless it is followed up by scientific replanning. Men can work at a tremendous strain for a few weeks ; but if we rely for too long on this unnatural pace they will break down—management and workers alike—and, so far from getting an improved output of essential supplies, we shall have to face a spate of accidents to men and to machinery, and an increasing disorganisation of industry.

Mr. Bevin and Mr. Morrison are well aware of this. They know that the initial spurt in the productive activity of the workers already engaged in the essential industries only gives them a brief time during which they must take in hand the tasks of reorganisation. It is no longer a question merely of getting the most out of the plant and the labour available for war production : it is a question of mobilising the entire man-power and machine-power of the nation, and of ensuring that it is all used to the fullest possible extent, and that none of it is used for less essential purposes when it might be applied to more essential purposes.

Even to conceive of this is to make a complete break with the past. The previous Government dealt separately with each of the main industries, and tried to use the existing trade associations, rings and combines (already powerfully entrenched under the protection of the Import Duties Advisory Committee) as the State's agents. This method was bound to fail. Trade associations inevitably aim at monopoly and have their eyes on possible post-war profits and losses as much as on wartime needs. They are by nature suspicious of " non-federated firms," and reluctant to admit them to a share in orders or to participation in valuable trade secrets and processes. For years past, they have been busy eliminating " surplus capacity " by all manner of restrictive devices, usually with the countenance and encouragement of the Government, the Bank of England, and the joint stock banks. It is altogether too much to expect that they will suddenly turn round now, and introduce of their own accord an increased productive capacity which they are bound to regard as a serious menace to their post-war prospects of profit.

But it is not only the industrial system which is at fault. When we turn to Whitehall we find a type of administration with precisely analogous defects. A nation which has refused all planning in peace-time cannot expect to find either in the Cabinet or in the Departments the machinery of a planned economy : nor can the reorganisation be achieved so long as it is left to Mr. Bevin and Mr. Morrison to do the work as departmental chiefs, in charge of Ministries which were not designed for this purpose. The first and most urgent need is a central planning authority which instead of co-ordinating the work of the various departments, as the present Cabinet Committees attempt to do, gives them orders to carry out. That such an authority is essential the Russian and German examples amply demonstrate : that the War Cabinet, as at present constituted, can assume its powers, no one would dare to pretend. Harassed politicians, with no proper secretariat or general staff, cannot, among all their other duties, play the part of the Russian planners or General Göring's Supreme Economic Council.

Our first proposal, therefore, is that the system of Cabinet co-ordinating Committees should be unified. What we need is a single Supreme Economic Council, under the chairmanship of a member of the Cabinet and attended by the permanent heads of the relevant departments and the Under-secretaries. This Council should not as at present merely receive from the various departments their lines of policy and attempt to co-ordinate them, but should have its own secretariat and thus be able itself to work out the Government's economic plans. This could best be done by enlarging the present Cabinet secretariat and turning one section of it into an economic general staff. Under this Supreme Economic Council, civilian Regional Councils should be established under the direction of Commissioners and with the same powers in their regions as the Central Council possesses in the country as a whole. Last week we stressed the need of new Area Military Commands : the boundaries of the new Regional Economic Councils must, of course, coincide with those of the Military Commands and the area military staff and Regional Economic Council should both be under the Regional Commissioners. Unless this type of central and regional organisation can be established there is no use talking about planning our industrial or agricultural output. Similarly unless the Area Military Commands are established along the lines we suggested last week, there is no use pretending that we are seriously coping with the problem of defence against invasion.

Once this administrative machinery has been built, it is possible to consider the ways and means of planning output. Here three principles must be laid down. In the first place, we need a pooling of industrial plant. When, for instance, seven motor-car factories are all maintaining their plant for the purpose of export trade in spite of decreased output it is impossible to talk of maximum output. Export production should be concentrated in one of the seven plants and the other six should be diverted to war production. But this cannot be done while the industry remains in private hands. To pool production the Government must either take it over completely or, and this is probably the simplest course, declare a moratorium and promise adequate compensation at the end of the war, and then use the emergency powers to plan its output. In order to do this job, however, it will be necessary first to split the cumbrous Ministry of Supply into a Ministry of Munitions on the one side and a Ministry of non-military War Supplies on the other, and secondly, to give to these two Ministries all the powers regarding supply at present possessed by the Board of Trade.

With these changes the pooling of production can proceed. The general outlines of the plan would be given by the Supreme Economic Council and would be based upon statistics derived from the Regional Commissioners and modified in the light of their criticisms. One of our most urgent needs is a vast increase of statistical staff and this could be accomplished by closing down scores of unnecessary bank branches and recruiting the clerks into the service of the Regional Councils. Other staff could also be gathered from the U.A.B. and also, as Mr. Bevin has wisely suggested, from the trade union movement.

The second principle of a war economy is standardisation. We cannot now afford the luxury of a dozen types of aircraft and tank, of tailor-made clothes, of chocolate and of branded goods. What the country needs are a few types of cheaply produced standardised articles, both for fighting the war and for feeding the population, and a whole range of luxury goods should be forbidden altogether. If we are fighting for the principles of liberty we must forfeit the consumers' choice of the upper classes at least for the duration of the war.

The third principle is the rapid expansion of rationing and of such schemes as the Ministry of Food's plan to provide an iron ration of milk below cost price to the poorer sections of the population. On this score little need be said except once again to deplore the optimistic utterances of Ministers who must be well aware that in the coming months the beleaguered fortress will have to be sparing in the extreme in its consumption both of food and goods.

If it is argued that such planning is too totalitarian and involves too great a degree of compulsion, there are two simple replies. The first is that the man in the street, whether he is a trade unionist, a clerk, a high official, or a manager, is prepared for any degree of compulsion provided that it increases the strength of our defences. The people will take it. It is their leaders who hesitate. Having renounced appeasement, they seem inclined to appease the appeasers and to seek their goodwill even at the cost of our national effort. We believe that a compromise on this issue will be fatal : if Mr. Churchill and Mr. Attlee present the House with a bold policy for a planned economy, there will be little opposition. In the second place, let us repeat, we shall soon be a beleaguered fortress in which nice questions of procedure and tradition will seem singularly irrelevant. From all over the world there is evidence that efficient planning cannot be carried out by an attempt to achieve co-operation between *laissez-faire* government departments and private business interests. It can only be done by a government which gives orders to Departments instead of accepting their arguments against the practicability of any common-sense plan. Mr. Bevin and Mr. Morrison are doing their best, but that best will count for little in the period immediately in front of us unless they or someone else are given the authority and the machinery to supply the beleaguered fortress.

THE FRENCH COLLAPSE

I SHALL never forget my last glimpse of Chartres and of its cathedral the morning after we had left Paris. We had passed through the Beauce plain, " *immense comme la mer, profonde comme la mer, océan des blés . . .* " as Péguy called it. The people at Chartres were in a state of dumb distress. Cars, vans, lorries, bicycles were streaming through the cathedral city ; the people looked on with bewildered eyes. Tired after our all-night run, we stopped for breakfast. Everybody's nerves were on edge. There were rows, *engueulades* all over

the place. The young waiter looked irritated. He couldn't be bothered serving us. He flung the basket of warm *croissants* on the table and kept us waiting indefinitely for our *café-crèmes*. Untidy soldiers sat around with a lost look in their eyes. The first cheerful faces we saw that day were a crowd of B.E.F. boys in a village we passed; they did not seem to realise all that was happening. They were washing and shaving and drinking tea out of tin goblets, and waved cheerfully at us. I wonder what has happened to them? But farther down the village, we passed a crowd of French soldiers, ragged, demoralised-looking: "Les Boches sont-ils à Paris?" they shouted. They were taking Germany's irresistible drive for granted.

The responsibilities for what happened go far back. I read Col. de Gaulle's book, *Vers l'Armée de Métier* back in 1935, and felt a little uneasy about the French Army ever since. I also remember the speech Reynaud made about the same time, and largely under Gaulle's inspiration. But Daladier and Gamelin took no notice of Gaulle, and Daladier, when he became War Minister, merely treated him as a crank, and would not allow him to rise above the rank of Colonel. He advocated a professional mechanised army of 500,000 men; our men on the left merely dismissed such an army as a dangerous weapon in the hands of a would-be Fascist dictator.

Those who ignored the advice of Gaulle and Reynaud are partly responsible for what happened four years later. It was the same people who, in subsequent years, created the legend of the impregnable Maginot Line. And when the war started, we had stories of this impregnable line hammered into us day after day by a press in the service of Daladier. The Maginot Line was all right as far as it went; but it did not go very far—only half-way along the frontier. And what of the Franco-Belgian frontier? Since my return to Paris in October, I persisted in asking everybody likely to know about it whether the "extension" was any good. I was assured by soldiers and politicians and other important people that it was being worked on night and day, that it was being built "on the principle of the Siegfried Line," and was "about as good as the Siegfried Line." I am not a military expert, and I confess that I was impressed by such unanimity.

The blackest day in my experience was May 15, when Colonel Thomas, the "official spokesman" at the French War Office explained the break-through on the Meuse and added: "And now the stationary war has become a war of movement"—precisely the kind of war on which the French, with their Maginot complex had not reckoned, and for which they were totally unprepared. The general assumption had been that the Germans, if ever they attacked France, would batter millions of their men to death against the Maginot Line. I am told that Mr. Hore Belisha resigned largely because he had made himself so unpopular with Gamelin with his everlasting questions about the solidity of the northern "extension."

Those who imposed the censorship on France also took an appalling responsibility; and as a journalist I feel it more keenly than anyone. An honest assessment of any situation, military or political, was just out of the question. You wrote an article, with all the pros and cons; what appeared in print was a catalogue of pros; all the cons had been blue-pencilled. During the eight months of the "phoney war" the world lived in almost complete ignorance of the real situation; and when the blow came, the French people were completely taken by surprise. The effect of this on the troops was incalculable.

I have known hundreds of French soldiers, both officers and privates; and I know that, given a sporting chance, they would have fought, and if necessary, died to the last man. But from the very day the Germans crossed the Meuse, many of them felt that they were fighting a losing battle. Worse still, they felt that they had been betrayed. That there were acts of supreme carnage among the French soldiers and airmen cannot be doubted for a moment. But, as Major Vautrin, one of Reynaud's men, explained to the press at Tours one day, they were fighting at the rate of one to three; their equipment was infinitely inferior to that of the Germans; many of the units had been in the front line for ten days without a respite, while the Germans were having their troops renewed every three or four days; and the French lines were getting thin, disastrously thin. The French press kept on talking of tremendous German losses; in reality these were insignificant compared with the French losses. Vautrin himself admitted that "our infantry has to fight, almost unsupported, against the German tank divisions." And when I asked Vautrin how it was that there were only 45 French divisions in the field against Germany's 120 when we had it hammered into us for months that France had five million men under arms, he gave an evasive reply. The story of the five million men had just been another piece of *bourrage de crâne;* and Pétain in one of his recent broadcasts admitted it. Yes; I believe that a large part of the French army was demoralised: demoralised by the lies that had been told it, and demoralised by the appalling vigour of the onslaught by the German tanks and dive bombers. The men in command had taken no notice of the Polish campaign; they merely dismissed the Poles as a poor bunch, and assumed that nothing like that could ever happen to France. But the men were not trained to deal with the mass incursion of tanks, nor with dive-bombers. In the second week of this "real" war we were told by a complacent press that the French troops "with their genius for improvisation" were beginning to adapt themselves to this new warfare. Was this a time for "improvisations"?

And in about the same number of days as unfortified, ill-equipped Poland, France was brought to her knees. The immensity of the tragedy is such that one cannot well take it in.

Now, the surrender of France is another story. When Reynaud came over to London for the Supreme War Council in April, he signed a pledge that there would be no separate peace—so at least the communiqué published after the meeting clearly implied.

After the fall of Paris a new Thiers-Gambetta situation was bound to arise. Reynaud was the Gambetta; at Tours he announced that France would go on fighting, "even if it were in one province only; even if it were in North Africa only." Good *lutte à outrance* stuff; though with perhaps just a little too much reliance on the doubtful support of America, which, he said, could now alone save the situation, provided it came "at once." Reynaud—a Gambetta of no very great calibre. But who was the Thiers? There was no lack of candidates for *that* job—for the job of signing a separate peace with Hitler. They did not bother about England. One of Hitler's most brilliant strokes was to have forced the B.E.F. to re-embark at Dunkirk. The French separate-peace men were now free to say that France had been left to fight Germany single-handed. It became the subject of the most intensive propaganda; and it was not without effect. For days after the evacuation of Dunkirk, England was no longer mentioned in the French Press. During the battle of the Somme and Aisne French military spokesmen bitterly complained of the absence of British support—even in the air. All this sort of thing was water to the defeatist mill.

The separate peace tendencies had already been clearly perceptible for a good fortnight before the fall of Paris. President Lebrun was known to be in favour of it. The Lavals, the Caillauxs, the Bonnets were working hard, especially at the Elysée. Reynaud had shortly before appointed Weygand Commander-in-Chief, and had sacked Daladier and de Monzie. But were the people he had put in their place any better? Pomaret, full of pro-Italian illusions, was de Monzie's man; Marshal Pétain, the Vice-Premier, though at first regarded as merely a figurehead, was under Franco's thumb. Baudouin, the Assistant Foreign Minister, was the mystery man of the Cabinet. He was tied up with high finance, and was known to have numerous connections with Italy. There was also Prouvost, proprietor of *Paris Soir*, which kept on suggesting that Germany did not wish the destruction of France. And then there was Chautemps. By the time the Reynaud Government had got to Bordeaux, the defeatists were in a large majority. The minority, as far as one can gather, included Reynaud, Mandel, Delbos, Dautry, Louis Marin and one or two others, who were prepared to save the Navy and to go on fighting in North Africa, if nowhere else. On that Sunday, June 16th, Reynaud was squeezed out of office, not without the heavy weight of President Lebrun thrown in against him.

Pétain is a man of 84. He became a tool in the hands of the defeatists. He imagined Hitler would talk to him like one soldier to another. Franco had no doubt assured him of Hitler's gentlemanliness; he might take away Alsace-Lorraine but France would live on. . . . All these Pomarets and Prouvosts imagined that France "would live on"; that Germany was after her pocketbook, and not after her body and soul. The Germans and Italians cleverly exploited these illusions. At Bordeaux the story went round that they were behaving very decently in Paris, and that they had appointed Chiappe head of the Town Council, or something like that. There might be other equally good jobs going. They imagined that Hitler would leave France what Leopold III had called "relative independence," and in this relatively independent France they would run the show. They believed it—even though not one of the ordinary French people I talked to believed a word of it. And there was another absurd illusion entertained by these people—that *Italy would protect France against excessive German claims*, even after she herself had declared war on France. The *Journal*, the *Temps*, the *Petit Journal*, as well as the Paul Faure Socialists (always notoriously anti-British) had for weeks talked of Italy's desire to set up a sort of "Latin Union" (France, Spain and Italy) which would counterbalance Germany. As for England—well, she just didn't come into such a federation,

and Germany could do with her as she pleased. And the old *cagoulard* slogan, "Hitler rather than democracy" was one that was not far removed from the minds of some of those who asked Hitler for an armistice. For they still imagined Hitler to be a defender of capitalism. The armistice terms, to which were to be added those of the *soeur latine* completely smashed all the illusions entertained by the Pomarets and other sub-Bonnets. They accepted them, nevertheless; they accepted the complete enslavement of France, rather than fight on, "in North Africa if necessary." Why? Was there some horrible piece of Nazi blackmail attached to the peace terms? Many stories have been told to that effect. But is that the true explanation? Did not the fatalism of many Frenchmen, their belief that in the end it was better for France to suffer eclipse—and perhaps through eclipse, to achieve some form of renovation—than to go on with the struggle against her powerful and prolific neighbours, play a very important part in what has just happened? The pacifism of the Munich days has reasserted itself a hundredfold this time. These men believe that France cannot die in the long run. Are they so sure? As for the *lutte à outrance* people can they ever be brought together? Or do they, too, imagine that France will, in time, expand again and cease to be the small inland vassal State between Limoges and Lyon that she is to-day?

London, Tuesday. ALEXANDER WERTH

A LONDON DIARY

No one should be allowed to imagine that the air raids that have come our way so far are more than reconnaissance and trial flights. Hitler goes all out when his plans are ready. Already, I hear, he is gathering transports at various ports and I should guess that his programme will be to bomb aircraft factories and docks, intensify submarine warfare against shipping and try invasions by air and land, all at the same time. The first and most dangerous invasion may well be in Ireland. I see that there is pressure in the Ulster Parliament to arrange joint defence with De Valera, but Lord Craigavon's government will take some shifting before it co-operates with Eire about anything. Instead of yielding to this sensible advice, the Ulster government is merely setting up a new Ministry of Home Security which is no real change and which is still to be under the same exclusively Orange partisan control. The defence of Ulster, which is part of Britain, should be put in the hands of a distinguished English or Colonial soldier who would be prepared to work sensibly with Mr. De Valera's government if the necessity arises.

* * *

How Hitler loves to turn tragedy into melodrama! Throughout the whole of the armistice negotiations with France, he has obviously been obsessed by the desire to extract the last ounce of symbolic vengeance for 1918 and at the same time to create the picture of the chivalrous peace between honourable soldiers. Think of hauling Foch's railway carriage out of the *Invalides* and taking it to the exact spot in the Forest of Compiegne where the previous armistice was signed! And observe the anxiety to ensure that in this Armistice it should be admitted that the Germans were not militarily defeated in 1918. It so happens that on this latter point the Oxford University Press has just published a pamphlet by Cyril Falls (*Was Germany Defeated in 1918?* 3d. O.U.P.). Captain Falls has no difficulty in once again disposing of the legend of "The Stab in the Back" and showing that the Allied armies were on the point of a crushing military victory. In the Battle of the Hundred Days they had captured a quarter of the German Army and half its guns. But as he wisely observes, it is puerile to try to single out special causes. The Blockade had undoubtedly ravaged not only the Home Front but also the Army's supplies: contact with the Bolshevists had made whole divisions in the East unreliable and finally, a point he does not sufficiently stress, the Bulgarian collapse threatened the Rumanian petrol supplies. The German defeat in 1918 was as total as that of France in 1940. But there is one contrast worth noticing: the Germans who received the Armistice Terms were headed by a civilian, Erzberger, and the Army was not directly represented. Hindenburg and Ludendorf ingeniously avoided taking responsibility for the defeat, leaving it to the despised democrats. This time it is the soldiers who baulked the democrats' attempt to defend their country. Pétain and Weygand seem to believe that soldierly honour will enable them to achieve a tolerable status for an anti-democratic France, and they are backed by the Civil Service and the Right. They will be disappointed, as Erzberger and the Social Democrats were disappointed, but with a difference. Whereas the Treaty of Versailles was a half-hearted attempt to apply democratic principles, Hitler's peace, if he enforces it, will annihilate France as a nation.

Every day I receive fresh news which suggests that the Home Office has completely lost its head. I see that Mr. Russell Strauss has a question in the House about the Spaniards—presumably from members of the Voluntary Labour Corps formed from the Spanish Republican Army—who were rescued at Dunkirk; and there is evidence that some of them are in gaol. Even if these men are not tried anti-Fascist soldiers, why should they not be interned for examination as Belgian refugees were? The Home Office is interning the leading anti-Nazis one after the other. This might be excused if the policy was to intern all German refugees and then sort them out. But even after the latest swoop "non-political" business men are at large, and it is among them that the likelihood of Nazi agents is greatest. This week the Home Office has interned Hans Gottfurcht, Chairman of the German Trade Unionists in London, and Rudolf Olden, who as a lawyer defended Ossietsky, the man who revealed the secret German rearmament. I know that it is possible to argue that anyone is suspect. But if that is so, then why intern the least suspect and leave others infinitely more suspect still at large? Does Sir John seriously maintain that Gottfurcht and Olden, men who have fought the Nazis unceasingly and risked their lives foryears in the struggle, are more likely to be Gestapo agents than Herr —— the non-political business man? Why does the Home Office always look in the wrong place?

* * *

This is not a minor issue. This country has become the last fortress of freedom in Europe. To win through, we shall have to organise revolutions in the conquered territories. This means that we must have German, Italian, Czech, Danish, Norwegian, Spanish advisers whom we trust and with whom we co-operate as brothers in arms. These advisers will not be non-political Jewish refugees or agents of foreign firms long established in this country—such persons may all be reasonably regarded as possible suspects. They must be drawn from the ranks of the anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist fighters. But the Home Office finds that nearly all anti-Fascists are Left-wing "politicals" and suspects them of anarchism and Bolshevism, because a generation ago the "enemies of the State" held these views. It has not yet discovered that the foreign agents of Hitler's revolution are never "politicals," but respectable business men, society women, policemen, Civil Servants, guileless servant girls—people without a clearly defined political faith for the most part. By arresting and interning the aliens who share our democratic faith and have suffered for it as some of them have suffered, the Home Office officials are doing as much harm as the Fifth Column which they are supposed to be hunting.

* * *

The Nazis have been astonishingly successful in preventing news from conquered countries reaching the outside world. Nothing has been published about occupied Holland, Denmark and Norway; there are stories, probably correct, that, apart from the suppression of Parliament and of free speech, the *Gleichschaltung* of the press and the appointment of Fascist officials and the beginning of an anti-Semitic campaign and the arrest of well-known anti-Nazis and refugees, the treatment of the Nordic peoples is generally good. One would expect that; the Nazis want their food and industrial production and as long as they are quiet they will no doubt leave them very much alone while they are busy with the war. Some news now reaches me from Holland about the followers of the Dutch Quisling, Mr. Mussert, who has for some years been a German tool. During the short war in Holland Mr. Mussert was in Germany. He returned and summoned his followers to one of their usual rallies at Lunteren. Theoretically hundreds of thousands should have come; actually reports say there were 35,000 which may probably be divided by two and which in the circumstances is in any case a small figure in a country of eight millions. The flags of Italy, Germany, Spain, Flanders, South Africa and the Netherlands were hoisted and Mr. Mussert proclaimed his admiration for Mussolini. The name of Adolf Hitler, "builder of New Europe," was mentioned later. The "founder of the German Air-arm" (which deliberately and without warning destroyed half Rotterdam, an open and undefended town of half a million people), was presented with a pretty gift—the huge tin and brass churchbell which was one of the party symbols of the Dutch Nazis. At the same meeting a new National Broadcasting Company was announced. It is to co-operate with the existing confessional, neutral and social-democratic Broadcasting Companies, which means, presumably, that it will in fact take over all Dutch broadcasting. No doubt the Nazis will gradually take over everything. Already Dutch soldiers must salute the Germans; the Dutch must accept German money (which they seem reluctant to do) and Dutch car owners are warned that

petrol is wanted for German tanks and aeroplanes. Everything will be taken over—including, if precedent is anything, Mr. Mussert and the Dutch Nazis. I have never envied Konrad Henlein or Seyss Inquart.

* * *

Federal Union has an oddly remote and idealistic sound at this moment and it is not surprising that the movement has passed through some curious metamorphoses in the last ten months. Incubated before the war, it was still at the time of the declaration in its chrysalis stage. During the winter, the chrysalis was broken and the movement winged its way into the full blast of public notice. This was the proselytising phase. During those winter months Federal Union was in the air; the membership rose by leaps and bounds and branches were formed all over the country. By the early spring there were more than 12,000 members, grouped in some 220 branches, and organisers travelling up and down the country were rapidly adding to their number. A number of tracts dealing with the economic, the constitutional, the colonial and the philosophical aspects of Federal Union were commissioned. Of these, one by Sir William Beveridge, entitled *Peace by Federation*, has already appeared. It is a constructive and admirably balanced statement of the general case for Union culminating in a plea for Federation at the end of the war. Defending himself against the charge of Utopianism, Sir William concludes: "The plan dares and needs to be Utopian because the choice is no longer between Utopia and the pleasant, ordered world that our fathers knew; the choice is between Utopia and hell." Brave words, but Sir William sees, and rightly, that any plan for Federation that does not include Germany is doomed from the outset. Yet, what sort of candidates for Federation are the Nazis? Clearly, if Germany is to be a tolerable member of any Federation, the Nazi Government must go, and with that realisation the movement has passed into its third stage in which members are bidden to work for the defeat of Nazi Germany as a necessary condition of the fulfilment of their hopes. Only, they are reminded, to defeat Hitler is not enough; they must enrol in a crusade for "the world beyond Hitler." "The world beyond Hitler," as a statement recently issued to members proclaims, "does not contain the old Europe of national frontiers, secret diplomacy and power politics. It contains a Union of free peoples in which we are all citizens of one great commonwealth with a common government to make good Hitler's devastation and to make laws for our common affairs, while our national governments look after our local national affairs." And so members are being asked to sign a pledge "to work in all circumstances for the overthrow of Nazism and for the world beyond Hitler." It is hoped that this crusade may become a rallying ground for Fifth Columns in all the countries which are now under Nazi domination. In effect, then, Federal Union is now proclaiming that the war must first be won and that then, but only then, whatever things are of value, including Union, may be added unto us. One by one all the rivulets of our national thought are being diverted into the single stream of the war effort. Just as Hitlerism irons out differences in those whom it dominates, so does it equally compel the sinking of differences in those who are driven to make common cause against it.

* * *

A correspondent who lives in a British port at which large numbers of people of every sort have arrived from France in the last few days sends me the following charming story. Crowds of arrivals waited behind a barrier. They were passed through and examined in turn. One important gentleman pushed himself forward. The guardian policeman told him to keep back. "Do you know who I am?" asked the gentleman. "I represent the house of ——" and he gave a very famous name. "That does not matter," said the policeman, "I represent Winston Churchill. And you will take your turn with the rest." I hope this is true!

* * *

A flower-seller at the corner has contributed the following to the anti-careless talk campaign:

> Don't talk in your sleep, there may be a jerry under your bed. Say it with flowers instead.

* * *

Among the many cases of mistaken arrest the most comic reported to me occurred at a South Coast pleasure resort. A visitor stopped a soldier to ask the way. Immediately a military official came up and said: "Did you speak to that soldier? Show me your identity card." The visitor had left his card at home. What other papers had he? He had a telegram from a relative saying that So-and-So could not come because of "German measles." An immediate to-do. Obviously a Fifth Columnist, code, German . . . . The visitor spent the night at the police station.

CRITIC

THAT GERMANY

THE *Sozialistische Warte*, a monthly publication of the illegal Social-Democratic Party of Germany, in its latest issue publishes a letter from one of its correspondents in Berlin describing the state of mind of the average non-Party German at the present moment, after the Nazi victories in Belgium, Holland and Northern France. The correspondent has travelled extensively throughout Germany and he gives an eye-witness account of what he saw.

The streets of Berlin resound with the shouts of newspaper boys calling out "Victory! Victory!—Extra edition!" People buy the papers and walk away in silence. There is no sign of jubilation, pleasure, or even of eagerness. The average man just scans the headlines and gives no indication of his feelings.

But when one speaks intimately with friends who trust one, they all agree that the Nazi victories have not produced the outbursts of enthusiasm and joy one might have expected. The chief reason is that the average German fears that these great Nazi victories only mean more and bigger wars, and there is nothing that the average non-Party German now wishes more ardently than a stoppage of the war. The average German knows, however, that if he will voice any of these sentiments in the open, he will be sure to land in a concentration camp, and he therefore prefers to remain silent and to keep his own counsel.

The same correspondent travelled through other parts of Germany, such as Pommerania, Baden, Wuertemburg, and everywhere he met the same dumb, ardent desire for peace. The victories have not brought the people nearer to the Nazis. The feeling of difference between the Nazis and the great mass of the German people is now stronger than ever. Most people realise that the war was started by the Nazis and that there could be peace but for them. The Nazi propaganda about the Plutocratic Democracies has not penetrated deeply into the people's minds. In many places the correspondent was asked: "Do you know why we are waging this war?"

Yet it would be a mistake to conclude that there is a strong organised movement against the Nazi regime in Germany at the present moment. The average German is cowed by the Gestapo whose efficiency he even exaggerates. People are afraid to take the slightest risk. Generally, it can be said that the average German is resigned to his fate; he feels that he is just a figure on the chess-board of the State and that he can do nothing but obey what he is told to do.

A typical street scene in an agricultural town in Wuertemburg is described in a letter from another correspondent in the same *Soz. Warte*.

The Gestapo agents have brought a group of Polish workers to the market place for the local farmers to choose labourers, in accordance with the notorious Nazi slave-labour system. The Poles, men, women and orphaned children, are grouped together; they cannot speak German and there are no interpreters for them. The farmers go among them and choose them as one chooses cattle chiefly because of their muscular strength.

Sometimes it happens that a farmer will choose a worker who is married, and another farmer will choose this man's wife. The Poles make frantic attempts to explain to the farmers their relationship and they plead desperately that their families should not be separated. The farmers are often moved by the inarticulate appeal, and they are willing to choose other labourers, but the Gestapo agents in charge of the group do not allow that. Most pitiful scenes, reminiscent of the worst times of ancient slavery when brothers, husbands, wives and sisters were separated at the will of the slave owner, are enacted.

According to the Nazi law, the Polish slave workers are not allowed to eat at the same table with the German farmers who employ them, nor even to drink a glass of beer at the same bar. One often sees, therefore, outside German public houses groups of dejected Poles standing like dogs in front of the entrances to the public houses, waiting for their masters to come out.

The prevalence of "Ersatz" articles in Germany has led to a remarkable growth of the glass industry in Germany. As glass is made of sand, soda and chalk, all of which need not be imported and is to be had in abundance in Germany, all sorts of articles are now being produced of glass: there are glass boilers, sinks, pumps, valves, all sorts of handles and bars, glass belts, glass clothes-hangers, and even bricks for building purposes made of glass.

Lately, even glass "cottonwool" and glass "wool" have made their appearance. A new kind of fire-proof glass called Jena glass has also come into popular use. This fireproof glass can be twisted,

pierced, even planed like wood. The use of glass articles, it would seem, will be likely to be one of the outstanding results in Germany of the present war.

A curious incident occurred in the Provincial German town of Duere. On the occasion of the metal collection by the German people which is now going on throughout Germany, a workman turned up with a large dustbin containing all sorts of old metal objects to be handed over to the State. As the workman was emptying the contents of the dustbin, the Nazi collectors were horrified to find among the rubbish a metal bust of the "Fuehrer." The workman was immediately taken to a separate room and subjected to an examination.

"What did he mean?" the Nazi official inquired angrily, Did he not know what sacrilege he had committed?

But the workman, evidently an old Socialist, refused to become perturbed. He calmly produced a newspaper cutting describing an interview which Goering had given to the *Deutsches Nachrichtenbuero* (German News Service). In that interview Goering stated that he had given away among others the busts of leading personalities in the Third Reich and there was no reason why people should not emulate his example and give away such busts to the Metal Fund, especially if they have no artistic value.

The Gestapo men were silenced by this, and although fuming inwardly, discharged the workman. But one can safely assume that he will not remain at liberty long for so daring a practical joke.

At last the Nazis have succeeded in producing a Bible without mentioning the Jews. The Old Bible has long been a thorn in the flesh of the Nazis, for despite the intensive propaganda against it, it is still the most popular book among the German people. The Nazis, therefore, set to work to produce a revised edition of the New Testament in which the influence of the Jews should be reduced to a minimum. It has taken many years to compile that masterpiece, but now it is ready for the edification of all the Nazis.

The new Bible not only reduces the influence of the Jews but manages to leave out all Jewish names. Jesus is referred to as the "First Aryan." Bethlehem and Jerusalem are not mentioned in the book, and all Jewish names are omitted. So far it is only the New Testament that has been so masterfully "revised"; the Old Testament is left, apparently, for after the war.

CROSS WORDS

ONE of the pleasures that do not fade as one grows older is the pleasure of seeing other people quarrelling about trifles. I remember enjoying particularly the report of a lawsuit in which a man accused his next-door neighbour of being guilty of allowing a creeper or vine or some plant of the kind to trespass over the fence into his garden.

Among all the quarrels that take place among trivial-minded human beings, few are more enjoyable than those that take place about the use of words. This is a matter on which tens of thousands of us feel strongly. Grammar, pronunciation, even spelling—these are things that make us bristle at times with an Irish terrier's pugnacity. A few years ago we were all fighting like street-rioters on the question whether the B.B.C. was right or wrong in the pronunciation it suggested for "Conduit Street." Even in the trough of a great war, I confess, I can find time in the middle of an announcement of events greater than ever were recorded by Thucydides to register an inward resentment of a B.B.C. announcer's pronunciation of "directly" as "dyerectly." If he pronounces "Wednesday" "Weddensday," what the Swede intends and what the French is for a moment forgotten in disapproval of a barbarism of speech. This, in spite of the fact that I have a soft spot for "Weddensday," since the man to whom I owe most on earth always used it in announcements from the pulpit, making me groan as a pedantic child.

Then there are the words that many of us more or less unreasonably hate. In recent years, I think my chief object of detestation among words has been "colourful." Every time I see it, I wish I had a dictator's power to banish it from English speech. Arguing with myself, I tell myself that, if it is legitimate to say "wonderful," it must be equally so to say "colourful." I am not convinced by this logical self, however. I dislike "colourful" as I dislike an over-worked popular tune or a million-times-repeated catchword like "There's 'air." Earlier in the century I disliked "meticulous" and "obsess" for the same reason. If "meticulous" had been meticulously used by a few writers, and if the word "obsess" had not become a universal obsession I should probably have had no strong feeling against them. I objected to them, I imagine, chiefly because, though they were like coins defaced with wear, they were constantly being used as showily as though they were coins new-minted. It is the same with "colourful." Through over-use, by advertisers of films and others, it has ceased to be a colourful adjective.

Much of my feeling about words, is, I admit, the result of prejudice. I hate, for example, to see "a hotel" called "an hotel" or "a historic occasion" called "an historic occasion." Better men than I are prejudiced the other way about. Again, I am prejudiced against the split infinitive. I regard it as the thin end of the wedge of something or other. Yet one of the few living masters of prose, Mr. Hilaire Belloc, has defended it. Other modern authorities have affirmed the correctness of "It is me." I, on the contrary, am an "It is I" man to the last gasp. Who shall decide when pedants and their opposites disagree?

Strongly though I feel about the correct use of the English language, however, I have never been able to feel as viciously about it as I should have liked. I have never experienced the tomahawk joy of scalping my opponents, as have some grammarians of the past. There was G. Washington Moon, for example, who in the sixties of last century published a book called *The Dean's English*, in which he mercilessly tore to pieces the English of Dr. Alford, then Dean of Canterbury and author of *The Queen's English*. Mr. Moon was apparently horrified—or, rather, delighted—to find this eminent authority on English himself committing all sorts of errors. "Rev. Sir," he begins his book, "on the publication of your *Plea for the Queen's English* I was surprised to observe inaccuracies in the structure of your sentences and more than one grammatical error." How the joy of battle breaks through in the courteously-worded sentence! From the preface to the book I gather that Mr. Moon had already poured a few broadsides into the Dean in the pious pages of *Good Words*, that the Dean—stung to a defence of his alleged errors—replied that he did not write for idiots but explained afterwards that, in speaking of idiots, he was not referring to Mr. Moon, but to idiots in general, and that Mr. Moon accepted the explanation with a well-acted sneer.

It is this sneer, recurring on page after page, that makes *The Dean's English* so enjoyable. Mr. Moon returns to the attack again and again with the mercilessness of a horse-fly or of a cloud of horseflies; Dr. Alford, it is clear, could scarcely write decent English except by accident. Objecting to a common use of the word "entail" in the press, for example, he wrote: "Nothing ever *leads to* anything as a consequence, but it always *entails* it. This smells strongly of the lawyer's clerk." To this Mr. Moon replies: "It was a very proper expression which Horace made use of when, speaking of over-laboured compositors, he said that they smelt of the *lamp*. But it is scarcely a fit expression which you employ when, speaking of a certain word, you say, This smells strongly of the *lawyer's clerk*. Lawyers or their clerks may be *odious* to you, but that does not give you the right to use an expression which implies that they are *odorous*." There, it seems to me, you have a pretty example of Victorian controversy with the gloves off.

Again, the Dean, protesting against the roundabout phrases in use among journalists, had innocently observed: "A man does not lose his mother now in the papers." If he had put inverted commas round "lose his mother," even Mr. Moon could scarcely have got near enough to him for a smack between the eyes. Elated by the absence of commas, however, Mr. Moon hurls himself on his adversary with unholy joy. "I have read," he writes, "figurative language which spoke of lawyers being lost in their papers, and students being buried in their books, but I never read of a man losing his mother in the papers; therefore I do not quite see what the adverb 'now' has to do in the sentence. Ah! stop a moment. You did not mean to speak of a man losing his mother in the papers. I perceive by the context that what you intended to say was something of this sort: According to the papers, a man does not now lose his mother; but that is a very different thing. How those little prepositions 'from' and 'in' do perplex you; or rather how greatly your misuse of them perplexes your readers." Go to it, Mr. Moon. Knock his block off.

I am afraid the word "idiot" rankled in Mr. Moon's soul. The Dean seems to have used it as a retort to Mr. Moon's criticism of one of his sentences. The Dean had written: "Sometimes the editors of our papers fall, from their ignorance, into absurd mistakes," and Mr. Moon, magnificently captious, seeing an opening, went for it. "Now," he writes, "we are so accustomed to speak of people *falling from* a state or position—falling from grace, falling from virtue—that your words naturally suggest that absurd idea of editors falling from their ignorance." It was at this point that the tortured Dean roared out: "We do not write for idiots." To which Mr. Moon replied: "Thank you for your politeness; I can make all excuses for hasty words spoken in unguarded moments, but, when a gentleman

deliberately uses such language in print, he shows by his complacent self-sufficiency, how much need he has to remember that it is possible to be worse than even an idiot. 'Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him' Prov. XXVI 12." That quotation from the Scriptures was, I think, rather like hitting below the belt, but, after all, no one likes to be called an idiot by a Dean.

Nor was "idiot" the culminating point of the Dean's bad language. He had written with equal vigour: "It must require, to speak in the genteel language which some of my correspondents uphold, *a most abnormal elongation of the auricular appendages*, for a reader to have suggested to his mind a fall from the sublime height of ignorance down into the depth of a mistake." This obviously annoyed Mr. Moon. He denied that he had ever spoken of falling "*down* into the depth of a mistake." "You say you do not write for idiots," he tells the Dean; "who else would imagine that it were possible to fall *up* into a *depth*? But," he goes on, "reverting to your expression '*abnormal elongation of the auricular appendages*,' you recommended us, in your former essay, to use plainness of language, and, when we mean a spade, to say so, and not to call it 'a well-known oblong instrument of manual husbandry.' I wonder you did not follow your own teaching and in plain language call me *an ass*; but I suppose you considered the language plain enough, and certainly it is: there can be no doubt as to your meaning." A retort somewhat below Mr. Moon's usual level, most readers will think; but possibly the word with which he would have liked to hit back at the Dean was unprintable.

He returns to his best form later in the book, however, with his now familiar straight left to the jaw, in the sentence: "You have told us you do not write for idiots; I wonder for whom it is you do write." Some people may consider such fistwork monotonous; but, as for me, I cannot have too much of it. I like to think of the doughty contributor to *Good Words* and the equally doughty Dean bleeding each other's noses over such questions as whether it is correct to say: "The cat jumped on to the chair" or "The cat jumped on the chair." Mr. Moon maintained that, if you said the latter, you must mean that the cat was already on the chair when she jumped. It is a pretty controversy that takes us back straight into the heart of merry Victorian England.

Y. Y.

THUNDER ROCK

AT 38 Harrington Road, S.W.7, three minutes' walk from South Kensington station, a play called *Thunder Rock* (it takes place in a lighthouse of that name on Lake Michigan) can be seen every night at 8, except Mondays. It is by a young American, Robert Ardrey, and it is the first production of "The Neighbourhood Theatre," of which Mr. Herbert Marshall is the moving and directing spirit. He studied under Stanislavsky, and his aim is to found a repertory theatre in London not unworthy of that great tradition. I will not say that the performance is flawless; lack of time, lack of stage-apparatus, has prevented the company reaching that pitch of perfection for which the Moscow Art Theatre was famous, but two things I can promise those who go: they will find it hard to imagine the characters being more completely and movingly interpreted, or, with the exception of a few brief moments, situations more impressively handled; and that they will not only lose themselves but find themselves in a play which seems to have sprung from the tormented conscience of mankind to-day.

How to adjust ourselves not only to meet what may be in store for us individually, but to the possible triumph everywhere of what we loathe, and the destruction of all that we served (at times at any rate) disinterestedly, and lent purpose to our otherwise unimportant and by no means consistently pleasant lives, is a kind of problem only superficially solved by making the best of things as long as they last. We need something stiffer than feckless courage, which can never be a *present* help at the pinch itself, though, in common with most inhabitants of this island, I am a believer in its efficacy beforehand. I think, however, I caught (Heaven knows if I shall keep it!) the infection of a better kind of courage from *Thunder Rock*. Or rather, let me put it this way, the play made clearer to me another fortitude, which can envisage actively the worst happening without despair. Its hero, a journalist in the prime of life, played by Mr. Michael Redgrave with a vigour and sensibility that could hardly be excelled, had found it impossible to live any longer as a detached reporter of the triumphs of brutality and folly everywhere. Before the play began he had had to choose (for he is what is called an intellectual) between taking an active part in the struggle, which scepticism prevented, or withdrawing from the world into his own mind.

> Be thou thine own home, and in *thyself* dwell—
> Inn anywhere, continuance maketh hell.
> And seeing the snail, which everywhere doth roam,
> Carrying his own house still, still is at home,
> Follow (for he is easy pac'd) this snail,
> Be thine own Palace, or the world's thy gaol.

To go on roaming like the snail was no longer possible to Charleston, whom the spectacle of mankind had excruciated almost to madness. He could not follow the advice Donne gave to Wotton, but he could take a practical step to cutting himself off completely: he became a lighthouse-keeper. He was a perfectly efficient one but such an oddity as the Inspector of Lighthouses had never met before; a lonely man who refused books, newspapers and a radio and met rare visitors in surly silence!

Dramatically, the entrance of Charleston down the steps from the lamp into the living-room is prepared by the talk about him between the Inspector and the airman (Charleston's oldest friend) who has brought the monthly stores. Our curiosity is excited to a high pitch; but this scene, when not taken with the rapidity of American productions, is perhaps a trifle too long. Then the old friends are left alone. Streeter (most vitally played by Mr. Robert Sanson) can no longer stand being out of the horrors of the struggle, and he has volunteered for active-service on the side of the Chinese in China—the side of right. Charleston points out that it means death, and suggests he might stand a better chance on the Japanese side. This is a final meeting between them, but before Streeter leaves he wrings from the stubborn Charleston the explanation why he had thrown up his career to live like a solitary prisoner in a lighthouse. It was to live in his imagination, and by preference with human beings who had had, at any rate, a future to look forward to while they were alive; the Captain of a sailing-ship which went down with all hands and emigrants on board, commemorated by a plaque upon the wall, in 1849. "This ivory-tower stuff won't work," is Streeter's comment. "Build the god-damned thing of stone, stick a light on it, put it out in the middle of a hundred miles of water, it's still an ivory tower and it still won't work."

"It's got to be tried," is Charleston's reply.

"Try China."

"China's been tried."

"One of us is wrong! I hope it's you."

"So do I."

This scene between the friend who thinks there is nothing now worth fighting for, and the friend who thinks a short life sacrificed in a cause is best, is moving, and marked by that laconic impressive concealment of emotion in which American dialogue excels—and sometimes overdoes. Then, while Charleston is still gazing seaward after a friend he will not see again, a gnarled old sea dog comes slowly down the lighthouse stairs: it is Captain Joshua of the lost barque "Land o' Lakes"—not of course a living man, not his ghost, but Captain Joshua as he lives in the mind of Charleston. Henceforward, the last two acts and the emigrants who also appear are all creatures of his imagination.

The play is clearly indebted to Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. There, if you remember, figures created by the imagination are endowed with apparently independent life, and Pirandello's device is used by Mr. Ardrey of making them correct themselves their creator's first conception of their motives and behaviour. The second act contains some of the most impressive dramatic scenes I have watched in any modern play. The acting of Mr. Fredich Vale as the emigrant doctor from Vienna who fled from persecution, deserting his experiments, is superb; and his daughter and wife, Anne and Melanie, are almost perfect. It was a happy thought to cast Miss Fredda Brilliant and Miss Vaz Dias (foreigners) in these parts. The cast is one in which it is ungrateful to omit any name. Briggs (a difficult part), taken by Mr. Bernard Miles, is good, and Captain Joshua is played with a remarkable reserve of force and a particularly fine voice by Mr. Percy Parsons. It is a fine performance. As the woman's-rights emigrant, Miss Rosalind Akinson was not so completely successful, but in drawing that character she had not such unerring support from the dramatist.

But how, you must want to know, is the attitude of Charleston towards the world changed? He starts imagining the scenes on board the barque and the people who went down on her in 1849, as one without hope for the future of any man or woman alive to-day might picture them. They are trivial human beings, blessed only in having hope—hopes which for ninety years or so seemed to be fulfilled. They could look forward. Then Captain Joshua corrects him: these were not the people he carried in his ship. They were better in many respects, but—and this is what Charleston begins to understand—they were people flying from evils they would not face; not happy

emigrants, but men and women who had shirked the task of fighting what had spoilt their lives. Then he tells them they are dead and must get out of his life. The difficulty is to convince them that they are living in 1940, and this is done by recounting what happened after their deaths. Many of the things they should have fought for were achieved by others—only achieved later. It is not he who draws the moral that civilisation was safe, though they could not believe it in 1849, but the Viennese doctor: "You are a traitor to your own intelligence. If you have the imagination to see us, living again in your mind, then you have imagination to see yourself, dead ninety years, and living again in another man's mind." We thought the world had no future and so fled from the task of making it. You are doing the same—postponing the better civilisation by refusing to struggle for it. Every obstacle gets in the end pushed aside sooner or later, but it depends on the courage of men in each generation whether that is done soon or late. "Why did you bring us here? Merely to escape your world? You brought us here to see, through our eyes—yourself." And Charleston packs his kit and shoulder's his rifle.

DESMOND MACARTHY

INAUGURAL ELEGY . . .

"By arming the people you run risks. Innocent people may be accidentally killed. That doesn't matter if the nation is saved."
T. L. Horabin, M.P., *News Chronicle*, 18*th June*.

THE curfew does not knell the parting day,
The lowing herd skedaddle from the lea,
The plowman leaps the stile to get away,
And leaves the village to the L.D.V.

The glimmering landscape hums with hand grenades,
The squire instructs his squad with simple skill,
The busy housewife builds the barricades,
The rude grandfathers of the hamlet drill.

By yonder lych-gate's ivy-mantled arch
The vicar kindles tar and paraffin,
Which, meant to halt the invader's armoured march,
May haply do one half the County in.

The blunderbus speaks from the twitt'ring clump
And wings the beetle on his wonted flight,
Age gets entangled in the stirrup-pump
And infancy hurls sticks of dynamite.

Far from anticipated zones of strife,
The village that upon itself relies
(With some inevitable loss of life)
Is not, like armies, taken by surprise.

And if some wanderer, innocent of blame
Receive the passing tribute of a shot
With stern resolve disharged but random aim,
This uncouth rhyme one day will mark the spot.

Epitaph.

Somewhere beneath this animated scene
There lies a swain who straggled from the road.
Shun, reader, like the plague, the village green
And shelter, trembling, in thine own abode.

SAGITTARIUS

SURREALISM TO-DAY

IN their effort to explore and liberate the unconscious the surrealists have in the past produced some surprising fantasies, achieving some of their best effects by juxtapositions of the incongruous, as in the paintings of Chirico and Dali and the *collages* of Max Ernst. It is perhaps true to say that they aim at abolishing the incongruous or at influencing us in such a way that nothing will appear incongruous to us except what is now regarded as the rational and conventional. They have already influenced our way of looking at things and provided a label for the unexpected. The other day, in a quiet street near Paddington, I was passing two quite ordinary people, one of whom, looking aloft, said to the other, "Completely surrealist!" I followed his gaze and saw, looking out of the first floor window of an otherwise empty house, a stag's head with spreading antlers.

At this moment, when our liberties are suspended, the Surrealist Group in England, to show us what they are doing, are holding an exhibition at the Zwemmer Gallery, and have issued a new number of their *London Bulletin* (Zwemmer, 5*s*.). Now the doctrines of surrealism being libertarian, it is a cult which affords scope to persons of no real ability as well as to the talented. Some of its followers are obviously as mediocre and incompetent, as devoid of thought, feeling and inventiveness as most of the exhibitors at the Royal Academy. There seems no reason to suppose that the unconscious is necessarily fertile or interesting: all depends on the individual, and it looks as if a pretentious bore is, alas, a bore even in his dreams and unwilled imaginings. A professed surrealist may be no less ludicrous in his orthodoxy than those resolutely unconventional people who have been common in the inter-war years, inverted bourgeois who would have been horrified if any of their mates had dared to sit on a chair instead of the floor, to wash his neck, enjoy a Christmas dinner or a football match, laugh at a joke in *Punch*, ignore Marxism, or do anything immediately useful.

The interesting exhibitors at Zwemmer's are those who are true and individual artists, for example (to name no others), Henry Moore, Edward Burra, John Banting, John Tunnard, Paul Nash. Moore, like Picasso, a ceaseless experimenter but perhaps a more disciplined one, dominates the gallery with his wonderful *Reclining Figure* in elm. This non-realistic goddess reclines in perfect awareness of her majestic self-sufficiency: she has a life of her own, and belongs to a mythology that is in process of being created. Near her are some exquisite *Drawings for Sculpture*, overtures to her begetting, tentative symbols in a new ideography; and some of the remarkable furniture of the world to which she belongs, notably a *Bird Basket*, like music made tangible. Edward Burra, whose work should be much better known, has in the past explored the exotic, appealing to the wit as well as to the eye and the emotions. He now shows two splendidly constructed panels, two halves of the same subject, a tragic and macabre vision that would surely have enthralled the author of *Death's Jest-Book*. John Tunnard paints with the delicacy of Klee, and in *Man and Woman* produces a sense of biological mystery, the poetry of anatomy, the gland that sings. A born designer, susceptible always to the lyrical strangeness of natural forms—the skeleton leaf, the branching vein, the jointed antennae of a winged beetle—John Banting shows a collection of drawings which reveal also his satirical tendencies. Paul Nash, in his *collage* called *Lebensraum*, produces an Abyssinian vista of desolation in which leaves, apparently of the gingko tree, have been successfully mounted as equatorial trees, their very shape evoking aridity and solitude.

These are aesthetic considerations: surrealism no doubt requires others. Let us observe at once that it is no longer possible to distinguish between the surreal and the real. Surrealism has already served a prophetic turn, and nature has once more imitated art. The high explosives which are now going off everywhere were detonated first in the unconscious. War brings the unconscious to the surface, and in total war the incongruous has already become the commonplace. Lautréamont's umbrella may easily find itself hobnobbing with a sewing machine on an operating table. Dali's melting watches, lost fried eggs, flesh beset by ants, disintegrating tripes in Libyan evenings, chests of drawers embedded in torsoes, are now features of many a landscape. A nun with a tommy gun descending by parachute in a farmyard knocks Max Ernst stone cold. It is not in the least surprising to hear that some returned soldiers of the B.E.F., brought to the exhibition, were not in the least surprised. "This isn't strange to us," they said, "it's just like what we've been seeing over there."

The moment has come, it seems, for the surrealists, like everybody else, to clear their decks for action. It looks as if they will be more effective than those Moscow Futurists who, when the Russian Revolution was getting under way, wrapped themselves in sheets, attached large springs to their feet, and bounded about on dark nights like phantom kangaroos, uttering weird noises. They are likely to be more effective because they are anything but defeatist, and, as a glance at *London Bulletin* will show, know which side their bread is buttered. Pandora's box has been opened and has let loose its bag of tricks, but it still contains Hope. "The careless have inherited the earth and, braver and braver carousing at the bottles of their intoxicating Power, are throwing it away—which is hopeful" (Banting). "Liberty is all that is left to-day that can exalt man and arouse, in opposition to the fanaticism of deluded slaves, a fanaticism valid and triumphant" (J. B. Brunius). And here is a manifesto on the very first page: "The enemies of desire and hope have risen in violence. . . . Fight Hitler and his ideology wherever it appears. We must. His defeat is the indispensable prelude to the total liberation of mankind." These hopeful and militant sayings are a sufficient answer to the ignorant Philistines who suppose that all aesthetes are fribbles and all surrealists dilettanti, and who do not know that culture foreshadows events, sustains hopes, and invigorates the human heart.

WILLIAM PLOMER

PLAYS AND PICTURES

The London-Rambert Ballet, at the Arts Theatre

Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose! The Ballet Rambert has always cast its bread upon the waters, and finds it after many days, with none of its quality lost. On the contrary, in the new amalgamation which we had foretold and hoped for, Mme. Rambert's former pupils, who are now her collaborators, have gained valuable experience of ballet production, and she has in Andrée Howard a choreographic adviser of ripened talent. The first new ballet shown by the combined London and Rambert companies is an amusing invention by Frank Staff, very ingeniously set and costumed by Guy Shappard. The music and presumably the libretto are by Prokoviev; *Peter and the Wolf* is, in fact, a charming children's operetta. The ballet is danced to a gramophone record in which a voice declaims the text, and instructively assigns to each character its appropriate timbre of instrument, rather in the manner of the Daniel Mayer children's orchestral concerts. Peter is admirably danced by Helen Ashley, who shows an unsuspected acrobatic and comic talent. Sally Gilmour, the genius of the company, is most engaging as the Duck, both before and after its absorption by the Wolf. Celia Franca is a graceful Bird which looms, however, rather too large. Walter Gore as the Cat obviously thought himself miscast, and hardly danced at all. Why, since the Cat's sex is betrayed by the libretto, was not the part given to a girl, to Peggy van Praagh or the still diminutive Bunty Kelly, whose gift for comedy was so deliciously shown a year—a lifetime—ago, as the Child in *Concurrence?* The ballet reminds one a little of *Renard the Fox*, and thus of the much larger stage which its setting and choreography really demands. Still more is one reminded that the film is the real medium for this kind of fantasy. Will even Sally Gilmour succeed in making Donald Duck tremble for his crown? The ballet was warmly applauded and is certainly a good and original effort on the part of Frank Staff.

"The Dark Command," at the Regal. "Virginia City," at Warners. "Nous les Jeunes," at the Academy.

The time-lag which makes one turn away from a stale placard or switch off news one has heard already seems to be working in favour of the cinemas. They no longer try to hold on to events. For a while there was a tussle between the celluloid and the real, and the screen would flash up, painfully, its stop-press from Dunkirk when our minds had moved on to Paris; but that sort of news is left now to the ticker-tape outside. As we walk past the mirrors and palm trees in padded corridors we realise that we are being sucked back into the old ostrich-house—the ostrich being, of course, the bird who buries his head in sand and will swallow anything. So in the cinemas this week you will find war certainly, but not this week's or last week's war, not even what was once optimistically called the Great War; our resting place is the days of the American Civil War. What excitement could be more anodyne? There are ambushes and advances, cavalry charge magnificently, the crack-crack of rifles alarms woods and villages—but moonlight lingers, the summer dress of the heroine is unruffled. No bullet, we may be sure, will be allowed to touch charmed lives, whatever may happen to the extras, who are the real heroes of these films and topple left and right from their horses. And, at moments, to reassure us, there will be Lincoln's silhouette against a wall, or a tableau which by its fashions or architecture reminds us how charming and long ago it all is. In neither *The Dark Command* nor *Virginia City* is it the war itself that provides the thrills, but rather the partings behind the scenes, treks across the plains, guerilla raids in which the individual still rides to triumph. There is, in fact, no enemy to menace our enjoyment; there are villains and they die briskly at the right time. North or South—we cease almost to notice the colours in this gymkhana. All is spectacle and speed. *The Dark Command* succeeds better than *Virginia City* because, though less sumptuous, it goes quicker, there are no pauses, and the melodrama has a clear-cut outline going back to D. W. Griffith. Even those who usually miss such films will find the tearing escapades, the prancing horses and hurtling wagons of this one, exhilarating. The acting, too, is spirited, Claire Trevor being much above the usual miss torn between two lovers, and Walter Pidgeon wearing the black moustaches of banditry with truculence and conviction. There are even moments of drama in the midst of melodrama. In fact, *The Dark Command* is the week's film for ostriches. Its excitements are harmless, except at one moment when a blazing street and its refugees suddenly touch the present.

Nous les Jeunes (showing at the Academy on Saturday) is a disappointment. It has been directed by Jean Benoit Levy and Marie Epstein, who made *La Maternelle*, but except for some moments of admirable acting and the background of the Alps it fails to grip. The theme of a number of young men, sickened by civilisation, who band together to find Utopia in a mountain chalet is treated half gaily and half with the earnest enthusiasm of Russian films about youth. The beginning—a human marionette clad in evening dress distributing shop leaflets in a city—is delightful; delightful, too, are the faces of young Utopians (most of them new to us) romping afterwards in the snow. But either the story should have been taken lightheartedly, as Guitry would have taken it (this would have been best), or the escapist theme should have been explored a little less conventionally. As it is the young men fall in with an equal number of young women, there are quarrels, hints of dictatorships and zigzags of sentiment, an avalanche of rock brings them together again in the face of danger, and they all decide to return to the world they have turned their backs on. Better and more mature, we are told, than when they went off. But it is a little difficult to see why.

Toulouse-Lautrec, D. S. MacColl, Raymond Coxon at the Leicester Galleries. Modern English Painting at the Lefevre. The Neighbourhood Centre.

The three shows at the Leicester Galleries present obvious and shattering comparisons. Toulouse-Lautrec is a marvellous genius, D. S. MacColl is a competent sketcher and Raymond Coxon a sensitive artist. Between the first room and the second the transition is from panther to dormouse. The panther is all steel and sparks. Grace is part of him, power and ferocity are his talents. A more remarkable example of the superiority of genius than these drawings would be hard to find, where every stroke quivers with controlled strength and every dot is significant; where there are no rules, no tricks, only a will to draw and the hand and eye to obey. The dormouse is a good animal, carefully unpretentious, thorough and sincere. He must not be blamed because he is not all fire and spirit; he must be praised for drawing Scarborough Castle and the château at Dieppe and a great many other equivalent subjects cleanly and crisply. Mr. Coxon is different again. He lacks genius and he lacks assurance, but he has imagination and in his pictures has created a world of his own. It is impossible to contemplate these strange landscapes of dales and fells under piebald skies without some heightened feeling.

Modern English painting at the Lefevre Gallery has an international flavour. Few of the pictures assert their nationality and some of them might have been produced almost anywhere the Paris art publications reach. With exceptions they belong to the clean-cut brand-new art. Exceptions are Graham Sutherland's paintings which have originality as well as a dramatic force, and Julian Trevelyan's which are wild and even rather frightening in a bad way. But the rest of the works are less pictures than objects of art, stimulating, tasteful in themselves and technically extremely well carried out. Ben Nicholson and John Armstrong in particular show interesting efforts to bring the landscape into the orbit of their previous more stern and abstract art.

The Neighbourhood Centre is a new pantechnicon of culture, complete with theatre, art school and so on, in Harrington Road, near South Kensington Station. The art gallery has opened with a competent and very diverse mixed exhibition. The high spots of the show are some banners by Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell and three really excellent paintings by Carel Weight.

THE COMING WEEK

SUNDAY, June 30th—
Prof. H. Levy: "The Destiny of Man." Conway Hall, 11.

MONDAY, July 1st—
Poetry Recital in aid of Red Cross by L. A. G. Strong, Central Hall, Westminster, 1.15.

TUESDAY, July 2nd—
Ebsworth String Quartet, St. George's Church, Bloomsbury Way, 12.45.
"Distant Point," by Afinogenov, Unity Theatre.
Madame Tabouis: "The British Offer of Anglo-French Union," Federal Union Club, 101 Piccadilly, 1s. 8.45.

WEDNESDAY, July 3rd—
Concert of Music by J. S. Bach, Huttenbach Trio, St. George's Church, 8.

THURSDAY, July 4th—
Dr. Klein: "Housing in Czechoslovakia," Housing Centre, 1.0. Admission 6d.
Ballet Premiere: "The Prospect Before Us," Sadler's Wells.

Correspondence

RECRIMINATIONS

SIR,—Those who have correctly appreciated both the significance of the Nazi dynamic and the reactions to it of the ruling classes in this country would seem to have what Dimitrov called a "natural and human right" to take part in your correspondence on "recriminations." Their feeling does not deserve expression just because it may in part be dictated by a regrettable and unavoidable bitterness, or because we feel with Mr. Keynes that "criticism of the retention of persons of proved incompetence in high and responsible positions" is not a mere useless recrimination of the past. These people are entitled to a considered hearing because they have correctly read the lessons of history.

Recent events in France have made it crystal clear that unless the British counterparts of Laval, Daladier and Co. are completely eliminated from political power, Mr. Churchill, Mr. Atlee, Mr. Bevin and Mr. Morrison may presently find themselves in the same position as M. Reynaud a few days ago. Moreover, Members of Parliament who, either knowing the situation or refusing to recognise it, have consistently voted for the appeasers, must be repudiated by their constituents. Otherwise we shall merely be provided with one more example of the failure of the democracy we are fighting to preserve, and shall give point to the Marxian thesis that our democracy will break on the rock of its own internal contradictions. A show-down is therefore imperative now. This, Sir, is not recrimination. It is horribly belated reconstruction.

The Stone House, H. W. S. WRIGHT
9 Weymouth Street, W.1.

THE LESSON OF FRANCE

SIR,—The last few days have been the gloomiest pages in human history. Had the French lost the war honestly the burden of defeat could have been borne serenely. But now to defeat has been added treachery—the most heinous of political crimes.

But to leave things by saying "'Twas treachery" is sheer folly. What has happened in France has a

lesson for every one of us, and if we are worthy of being called rational beings, then we should not only be aware that a betrayal has taken place but should seek to understand why it did take place.

What happened in France was not the solitary acts of a Pétain or a Laval. A few men cannot betray a whole nation. It is Fascism in the person of the property-conscious Right that betrayed France. A total war under a democratic system is a thing that capitalists dread, for that implies a Socialism of some kind. Rather than give away their profits and have their means of production subject to a democratic control the propertied class deliberately called in their Saviour, Hitler. This has happened often—in Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, etc.—and yet people prefer to ascribe fanciful reasons for this recurrent phenomena. Only of late are the papers talking of the palsied hand of wealth behind this devilish doctrine called Fascism.

As far as Western Europe is concerned, only Great Britain has not as yet fallen into the dark pit of Fascism. I say "as yet" because those elements that brought Fascism to power without any qualms of conscience are in this country, too. Let us not delude ourselves by talking about the "democratic traditions" of England which makes inconceivable the appearance of Fascism here. Germany, France, and Spain were democratic countries once upon a time. Let us not sleep comfortably on false biology. Capitalists of any nationality react alike, and the saving of their property is paramount in their minds. Look up the names of the betrayers of Norway, Belgium, Spain, etc., and there is undeniable proof of where the Fifth Columnists have their roots.

These people still hold power veiledly or openly in this country to-day. They will oppose Fascism if it is profitable for them to do so, or shake hands with it when there is something to be gained by such an attitude.

I don't say that these capitalists are blackguards. It is that they believe in a capitalist system which forces them to act in such a manner. Consciously or unconsciously, they believe that the downfall of Capitalism means also the end of civilisation.

But as far as the majority of mankind is concerned the downfall of capitalist civilisation means also human salvation. The war is not between German civilisation and Western civilisation but between Capitalism and Socialism and we must have the latter if we desire victory. S. R. RATNAM

12 Steele's Road,
London, N.W.3.

SIR,—Writing on May 20th, Alexander Werth thought it great loss that Weygand had till then been barred from running the show, because of his "clerical" politics: at the time this regret seemed well founded; but now, since Weygand is prominent in Pétain's government of surrender, it seems that the Left's distrust of Right-minded Generals was justified.

Franco's role in this war has been more subtle than we foresaw; we expected him to emulate Mussolini, but his actual task has apparently been the "friendly" persuasion of Pétain and the French Right that Fascism is invincible and moreover that Fascism is preferable to democracy. These aged Generals are probably sincerely convinced that this is so.

Without wishing to encourage irresponsible hysteria, one wonders whether similar influences here are yet sufficiently discounted.

Cotherstone, H. E. BOURNE
Barnard Castle,
Co. Durham.

PARACHUTES

SIR,—Since you appear to be collecting parachutist stories, the following may appeal to you.

I was recently cycling for three days "somewhere in England" in an interval between political meetings.

Having put up for the night in a certain village without a signpost, but clearly marked on my map, I took a stroll up a neighbouring hillside, across a golf-course, to the edge of a wood. On my way up I passed some boy-scouts and spoke to the steward of the golf-course. On my way back I passed three old ladies and some youthful couples.

Later in the evening, having visited the local pub I was contemplating trout in the river. A car drew up, out stepped two uniformed policemen and a third in plain clothes, and I was asked for my identity card, which I most fortunately had with me.

I was then asked, and respectively answered, the following questions in quick succession: "Where do you come from?" "Why did you come here?" "Where are you going?" "Do you know anybody in this neighbourhood?" "Then why *did* you come here?" "What's your job?" "Where do you work?" "Where are you staying the night?" "Were you up the hill just now?" "Why did you go up the hill?" "Have you any wool on you?"

Apart from my hair, and unlike Baa-Baa-Black Sheep, I had no wool. In order to prove this I had to demonstrate that one of my pockets was bulging only for the reason that it contained a handkerchief. My other pockets were not examined. I was then asked if I had any letters or any other marks of identity—an identity card, as we all know, being no mark of identity.

In the course of cross-examination I had revealed the fact that my job was to edit *Russia To-day*, expecting that this would once and for all condemn me as part of the "Fifth Column." It didn't. And as a result my respect for the rural constabulary has gone up.

Instead, after a few further questions, the plain clothes chief took me into his confidence and explained that I "had been associated with some wool on the hillside." The three old ladies had found, on reaching the wood, some strands of sky-blue knitting wool hanging on a paling. I had in fact noticed this wool myself. On proceeding further, they had found more wool, and more wool. Obviously this was a sky-blue trail for parachutists, and they informed the local police. The results are described above.

But that is not the end of the story. Convinced of my non-parachutist origin, the plain clothes chief became affable. "You have been in Russia? Tell me, what is it like there?" And I gave a short description of what I considered the Things that Matter. "Excuse me, sir," said one of the uniformed men, "but do you think that Russia will help us?"—I then explained the situation as I saw it. "Well," said Plain Clothes, "we'd better be going, you might convert us!"

Which all goes to show two things: That all this talk about parachutists may be giving a real thrill to rural old ladies, but must be a terrible nuisance to the rural police. Secondly, that even the rural police are beginning to look with anxious hope towards the land of Stalin and Socialism.

8 Red Lion Square, PAT SLOAN
W.C.1.

THE GESTAPO AND THE REFUGEES

SIR,—Article 19, clause 2 of Hitler's armistice terms to France runs as follows:

> French government to hand over all German subjects indicated by German Government who are in France or in French overseas territory.

This article will be the death warrant for thousands and thousands of political refugees from Germany living in France. That country was the classical country of political refuge. Men like Heinrich Mann, Lion Feuchtwanger, Friedrich Wolf and numerous other writers are still in France. Leading representatives of all the organised underground opposition inside Germany have been in Paris. Since 1933 we have received fragmentary, but impressive news about this furious, silent battle in the dark. The very existence of the Gestapo and of all the terror of the concentration camps and of wholesale beheading of political opponents proves how much Hitler fears the influence of these men, representatives of the best part of the German people. He outlawed them by the hundreds and bereaved them of their German citizenship.

Immediately after the occupation of Holland he passed a new law, ordering that all these people should be punished for their political activities outside Germany, in spite of being no Germans any longer by German law. In consequence of this most of the political refugees, captured in Holland, were shot by the Gestapo. Others were brought to Gestapo centres to torture out of them information about underground connections inside Germany. The same hunt is going on in Belgium and in the occupied part of France. How many the Gestapo captured in Paris alone is not known yet. Thousands, who have been interned near Paris, were simply handed over to the Gestapo by the French Police. The same thing happened as in Holland. Only the guard before the camp changed and the Gestapo could start their work.

The bulk of the political refugees from Germany, however, were interned in the South of France or are massing in Bordeaux, Pau and other places, together with the Austrians, Czechs, Italians, Spaniards and so on, who are in a similar position. Most of them are still in camps, as in the large camp in Gurs, where 3,500 women were concentrated, or in the camp in Vernet. Almost all of the former International Brigaders, formerly in Gurs, are in labour battalions, mixed up with the retreating French army. Nothing is known about them, but many are certainly in the still unoccupied South of France.

Many of the most endangered ones can still be saved by quick action. Approaching the American authorities in the right way may open a way through Spain under American protection. In a similar situation it was possible to bring German and Austrian refugees through Poland under British protection, in spite of Poland just having participated in the partition of Czechoslovakia.

Instead of looking for some solution of this desperate problem, which is not so unimportant for the future of Central Europe, papers like Lord Beaverbrook's *Sunday Express* of June 23rd accuses these people, without proof, of having played an important part in the French Fifth Column. This is just part of a policy of copying the reactionary methods which led so terribly to disaster in France, in this problem, too.

To learn this lesson from France in the question of refugees and to save as many as possible of these representatives of the best part of the German people would be right from a humanitarian, and far-sighted from a political, point of view. CITIZEN

SIR,—May I plead for the immediate internment of aliens of enemy nationality, as a measure that is reasonable and absolutely necessary? It is indeed grossly unfair to imply that the advocates of a drastic internment policy are affected by prejudice or hysteria, for their arguments depend on common sense.

It is surely a most fatuous mistake to suppose that any guarantor, however respectable, can, by certifying the respectability, amiability or loyalty of enemy nationals, prove them to be harmless to this country.

Unfortunately, respectability, amiability and loyalty are virtues that have been revealed to be only too common among the more dangerous members of the Fifth Column, and in fact these qualities are essential requisites in any really good spy.

If, therefore, we wish to save this country from the evils of invasion, we may no doubt deplore the hardships that will inevitably be inflicted on those that are innocent, but we must at all costs refrain from giving even the best of these people the benefit of a doubt. Those who are the innocent victims of this policy must reflect that in submitting to the temporary loss of their liberty they are making a sacrifice for the sake of the life of the nation on whose security their own lives will ultimately depend. C. F. MEADE

Pen y Lan,
Meifod, Montgomeryshire.

SIR,—May we Austrian refugees heartily endorse Mr. Wenzel Jaksch' helpful letter which you published on June 22nd?

There is in fact not a single report from Norway, Holland, Belgium or France indicating that any refugee has taken part in Fifth Column activities. On the contrary, the real Fifth Columnists, Quisling and Mussert, always have been in the forefront of virulent anti-refugee campaigns. They have been using the refugees as scapegoats when their countries were threatened by the Third Reich, and by focusing public attention on the refugees they have diverted attention from themselves.

By far the most urgent refugee problem of these days is that of the political refugees from Central Europe, who are trapped in France. They include German democrats—Heinrich Mann, Lion Feuchtwanger, Friedrich Wolf are among them—Czechs, Austrians. A number of them have fought for the Spanish Republic. Many Central Europeans have served with the French and British Pioneer Corps. Point 19 of the armistice terms stipulates the handing over of all German citizens whose extradition the Nazis may demand. The fate of the political refugees after capture by the Nazis is easy to imagine.

We believe we can be certain of the active sympathy of our British friends in asking that steps may be undertaken to save the lives of these experienced fighters for freedom.

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FRANCE AND BRITAIN

This supplement has been prepared by the Anglo-French Co-operation Committee of the Fabian Society. This Committee was set up some time ago in order to promote the study of Anglo-French relations, and to help in bringing about closer co-operation and understanding between the British and French democracies, and particularly between the Labour movements of the two countries. In the changed situation which has now arisen, the Committee proposes to keep in close touch with French Socialists, Trade Unionists and democrats generally, now in Great Britain or in the French colonies and also, as far as possible, with those in France itself. It hopes, by the publication of a regular bulletin of news and comment, to keep British democratic circles informed about developments both in France and wherever Frenchmen are able to continue the struggle.

The Committee is prepared to supply articles and information for publication in Trade Union and other journals which ask for it, and will in the near future issue a more precise announcement of its plans.

The Fabian Society's Anglo-French Committee has the following members :—G. D. H. Cole, Margaret Cole, R. H. S. Crossman, Henry Hauck, G. R. Mitchison, W. Pickles, W. A. Robson, R. H. Tawney, Leonard Woolf, K. Zilliacus, and John Parker, M.P., General Secretary, the Fabian Society, 11 *Dartmouth Street, London, S.W.*1, *to whom communications concerning it should be addressed.*

AT the moment when the German armies began to overrun France, the Fabian Society was about to publish the first number of an Anglo-French Bulletin, designed to foster co-operation and understanding between the two peoples, and more especially between the French and British Labour movements. The Fabian Society had also set on foot, through its research organisation, a special inquiry into the best methods of drawing Great Britain and France and their respective peoples closer together, not only for the common task of fighting the war, but also with a view to close and lasting collaboration in the Europe of to-morrow.

The question that faced the Society last week and this was whether the tragic events in France must involve an abandonment of these projects. We have decided that, so far from abandoning them, we ought now to continue them with redoubled vigour. For the moment, France itself has been subdued, and the army on the French mainland has laid down its arms. But there remain large forces still intact in the French possessions overseas ; there is still the hope that the French Navy, or most of it, will be able to continue the fight in partnership with that of Great Britain ; and already there are gathering in this country influential Frenchmen who repudiate the surrender of the Pétain Government and are preparing to constitute in its place a new authority with infinitely better claims to represent the will and the spirit of the French people.

Perhaps before these words appear, or at all events in the immediate future, there will have been set up in this country a French National Committee, as the rallying point for a truly national movement of all Frenchmen who are prepared to continue the struggle in the spirit of Anglo-French democratic co-operation ; and upon this Committee and its coadjutors in the French colonies will fall the main burden of creating the new France. For our part, we have thought it right to give, in this first publication of our Fabian Anglo-French Committee, the fullest support to these developments ; for though there will necessarily be differences of social outlook and long-run purpose among the members of the French National Committee, the supreme need of the hour is that all good Frenchmen should stand together in this tragic time for the French people, and that all of us in Great Britain should give them every possible help. Just as the leaders of the British Labour movement are working hand in hand with Mr. Churchill to beat back the onslaught on our democratic liberties, so Frenchmen of many different views must work in comradeship, united by their common hatred of Nazi brutality and oppression and of the entire totalitarian philosophy of which these things are the outward and visible sign.

We, for our part, have no doubt about the issues which are at stake. The French and British peoples, with all their national differences in outlook and way of life, have in common certain fundamental faiths and ideals. In common, they believe in the freedom of thought and culture, in the basic institutions of democratic government, and in political and social liberty. In many respects the practice in both our countries has indeed fallen far short of the belief ; but both peoples have shared the faith that they were building up their civilisation upon a right basis of values, and that democracy could be for them at once an end in itself and the instrument of necessary social and economic change.

This is the fundamental quarrel between the British and French spirit and the evil spirit of Nazism that is now overrunning Europe. Until that evil spirit has been exorcised by defeat in war, there can be no room in Europe either for our ideals or for the common decencies of living which both our peoples respect and cherish. For the moment, then, our supreme task is to compass the destruction of Nazism ; and in pursuing this task we cannot afford to quarrel among ourselves. We may differ one from another about the precise character of the new social and political order which should arise on the ruins of the old, broken Europe. But these differences are secondary to our main purpose of ensuring the emergence of a social system in which we can once again call our lives our own.

Moreover, it is plain enough that the new Europe that will emerge from Hitler's defeat must, irrespective of our private wishes, possess certain characteristics that will mark it off sharply from the Europe of the past. It will be, for a time, an impoverished Europe, no longer able to afford the great inequalities of wealth and income that have hitherto gainsaid so many of its democratic professions. It will be a Europe in which, plainly enough, the old notion of national sovereignty can no longer stand ; and peoples will have to work together across frontiers in much closer collaboration and unity of spirit than ever in the past. Nor can we be ignorant, after the experiences of the past twenty years, that political is impracticable without economic collaboration, or that, if we wish to live secure, we must be ready over a wide field to pool our resources, our thought, and our scientific and technical knowledge as well as our armaments. In short, this new Europe for which we are working will be an integrated Europe, but so integrated that there will be in it much more real democracy, based on a greater economic equality, and much more room for individuals of all classes to think for themselves, and to live their own lives within a social order designed to foster, and not to crush out, their personal freedom.

These are the purposes for which we have to work ; and in working for them the close co-operation of Frenchmen and Englishmen is, before all else, vital. It is a tragic fact that Great Britain's offer of equal and joint citizenship for the peoples of Britain and France should have come too late to influence the immediate course of events. It is easy to see now that, from the very moment when our peoples became comrades in arms against the Nazi menace, they ought to have been bound firmly together by bonds much stronger than merely military union. There ought to have been ceaseless coming and going between the two countries, not merely of a few leaders, but of ordinary citizens who could have carried the message of unity from the one people to the other, kept each informed about the other's doings, and ensured a continuous interchange of democratic opinion across the narrow seas which hold them apart. There ought to have been, not merely inter-Allied naval and military commands and joint economic missions for Allied purchases and rationing of supplies, but also a common front of democratic opinion, and an attempt to lay some foundations for close common action after as well as during the war.

To some people, these may seem empty words, after the events of the past fortnight. But though the French army in France itself has laid down its arms, that is not the end of the story. Fatally deceived and betrayed by the false strategic doctrine of merely defensive war, and given inadequate help from our own country, which the follies of our late Government had left lamentably unprepared, the army in France has been driven back by sheer weight of metal, and thereafter has been completely surrendered to the enemy by the Pétain Government. But therewith a new chapter begins. If Great Britain can stand out against Hitler, as we believe we can, the defeat of his hopes of vanquishing Great Britain will mean also the end of his domination in Europe. There will be a whole continent to rebuild ; and the hope of rebuilding it on assured democratic foundations will depend primarily on the united effort of the French and British peoples.

That is why, though few Frenchmen have yet been able to reach Great Britain from the stricken homeland of France (though there are, we believe and trust, many in the French possessions overseas who are eager to continue the struggle), it is of vital importance that we should begin here and now to rebuild the closest possible contacts between the Frenchmen who are among us and the body of British democratic opinion, in order that the new co-operation as it develops may rest on more secure and unshakeable foundations than the old.

In that spirit we offer this Supplement, which we intend to make the first of a series of Bulletins, pamphlets and articles devoted to the

following questions in quick succession: "Where however, were interned in the South of France or are

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cause of Anglo-French co-operation, as a small, but significant contribution to the better understanding in Great Britain of French affairs and of those Frenchmen who, in the present tragic situation of their country, are determined to go on fighting for democracy and for a just and democratic settlement in Europe, no matter how long or arduous the struggle may be.

In this present issue, we do not propose to discuss the basis of any future settlement. It is already plain that it cannot rest on any return to the conditions of the past; for it is the weakness and pusillanimity of our old systems that has brought upon us our present defeats. Here in Great Britain, the organisation that we are at last building up for the efficient conduct of war will in many of its features outlive the emergency, and serve as a basis for greater equality and a more creative collective control of the essential economic forces of our country in time of peace. France will undergo a corresponding, though by no means identical, reconstruction.

These issues we shall discuss later, with many others that will become ripe for discussion as the research work which the Fabian Society and other bodies have set on foot with a view to their solution begins to mature. Beyond that, we can give only a very general idea of what future issues of this Bulletin will include. We hope to be able to give news—such news as can be got—of events in France under Nazi control, and of events in that France beyond the seas which we have now to help in saving itself from German and Italian invasion.

We hope to offer our readers contributions from leaders of French democratic opinion, and especially from our friends of the French Trade Union and Socialist movements who have escaped from their unhappy country, as well as articles by British writers who know France and are able to interpret her spirit to our own people. But what we shall offer to our readers must depend on the future course of events, which to-day none of us is able to foresee. Only this we know—that there is a war of ideas as well as of arms in the world to-day, and that in this struggle we in Great Britain and our fellow-democrats in France and in other countries cannot win real victory unless we are able to cast off our national parochialisms and to think as big as Hitler, but to an infinitely better purpose. French, British, Scandinavians, Poles, Czechs, Belgians and Hollanders—we must lay united plans for refashioning our shattered world. Nor in this task can we afford, however the French people may momentarily be trampled in the dust, to do our planning without the help of those whose ancestors stormed the Bastille and drew up the historic Declaration of the Rights of Man.

G. D. H. COLE

THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF THE GREAT COLLAPSE

[BY A FRENCH SOCIALIST NOW IN LONDON]

IT is difficult to understand the cause of the cataclysm. How could an Empire such as that of France collapse in a few days, even in a few hours? How have the worms been able to bore through the beams of this great edifice?

Incapable men, trying to impute the blame for their faults to others, will not hesitate to resort to slander. It must therefore be said immediately, at the very beginning of this article, that the French soldiers and officers, the armed people of France, has no responsibility whatever for the catastrophe. For eight months I was metamorphosed from a foreign editor into a war correspondent and shared the life of our troops. Like all my colleagues I can bear witness that the soldier of 1940 was in no way inferior to his predecessors. Barely eighteen days ago I found myself south of Ouchy le Chateau, between the Aisne and the Marne. I can testify that the men who had been under fire uninterruptedly for five days and nights returned to the battle full of fighting spirit. We must not let the incapacity or the treason of their chiefs obscure the heroism of the soldiers.

The faults of the French General Staff are literally unbelievable. Never, I verily believe, has the world seen such total lack of understanding of the character of a war. Until the end, in spite of past experience, in spite of Spain, in spite of Poland, the heads of the great General Staff refused to consider the tank and the aeroplane as anything but auxiliary arms. The most venomous intrigues were set on foot against General de Gaulle, whose views proved prophetic.

Such stupidity and short-sightedness are staggering. How could they fail, after the battle of Belgium, to fortify the country, to cover it with anti-tank traps, to construct "pill-boxes," to fortify the banks of the Seine and the Loire? Why did they not move to the south west the intact forces that were holding the Maginot Line?

But did it really wish to resist, this General Staff which refused to defend Paris? Did it not believe, after the reverses on the Somme, that everything was lost? And yet resistance was well possible even at the last moment. Officers like de Gaulle thought that. So did politicians of as different a complexion as Paul Reynaud, Mandel, Herriot, Louis Marin, Leon Blum, Jeanneney.

It was still possible to proclaim a state of siege, *la patrie en danger*, to call the people to arms (*la levée en masse*). Of course, we are no longer in 1793. It is not enough to charge the enemy with a rifle. But the people of France could have been mobilised and put to work preparing anti-tank traps, mining the roads, etc. . . . But this appeal to the people would have assumed a quasi-revolutionary character. It corresponded to the republican instinct of the country. We are entitled to believe that such a movement would not have been considered desirable by General Weygand and his colleagues. Let us say it plainly—they must have been more afraid of a popular movement than of Hitler succeeding.

However extraordinary the fact may appear to the man in the street, these gentlemen never understood the true character of the Nazis. They appeared to have believed that Army Officers would always, in the long run, understand each other. They confused the Hitler regime with William II's generals. The whole thing must have seemed simple to them. They imagined, so fatuous were they, that all they had to do was to agree to certain territorial sacrifices. After that, with the consent of their German colleagues, and in accordance with the good old rules of military "loyalty," they would have been authorised to establish their dictatorship over the country and to escape their crushing responsibilities. In any case, at the bottom of their hearts, many of them preferred the Hitler regime to a popular movement.

That is probably the view of General Weygand, who is a foreigner by birth. But that is also how a whole section of French capitalists feels, although born in France of French parents. The truth, let us not shrink from using the word, is that a large proportion of French bourgeoisie was in full decay, and undermined since many years by the Fifth Column.

* * *

To understand what has just been said, we must go back to February 6th, 1934. On that day, thanks to an insurrection which no one in Europe has forgotten, French big business endeavoured to impose Fascism. There is evidence to-day to warrant the assumption that the February 6th rising was staged in full agreement with foreign Fascism. Let those who may feel inclined to consider this statement too categoric remember the bonds between certain French fascists and the dictatorial regimes. There is no secret, for instance, about the fact that behind the "cagoulards" were Mussolini and Hitler.

The February 6th attempt failed because the people were sound, and the old democratic and revolutionary tradition was too deeply rooted in our old and free country. The reply to February 6th was the constitution of the Popular Front, which arose spontaneously from the French masses in the elections of June, 1936.

The time has not yet come to examine the mistakes made by the Popular Front Government. There were mistakes. It is enough to say that after the first few weeks, when it became clear that it was not possible to do anything to the foundations of capitalism, the French big business and banking oligarchy which had been knocked out by the success of the Left began to revive. It wished to bring down at any price and by any means the Government that had been chosen by universal suffrage, and in any case it was determined to prevent it from pursuing an anti-fascist foreign policy.

Here in England you have not forgotten the campaign which was conducted by the French capitalist press against aid for the Spanish Republic, nor the campaign against Czechoslovakia. The capitalist newspapers faithfully echoed the slogans of Hitlerism. They talked of the need for leaving Germany a free hand in the East. Hitler was treated with sympathy and the worst abuse was reserved for the U.S.S.R., which was, nevertheless, allied to France by a Treaty of Mutual Assistance whose author was M. Pierre Laval. In the first rank of this press is *Le Matin* (M. Bunau-Varilla). But in justice we must not omit the weeklies which rendered the most precious services to the Fifth Column. Enough can never be said of the havoc wrought among the French bourgeoisie by *Gringoire*, the organ of the Chiappe family, the Chiappe who is to-day Mayor of Paris under the protection of Hitler. It was *Gringoire* which, at the time of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict, spoke of reducing Great Britain to slavery. Above all, how can one forbear to mention *Je suis partout*, which in the months preceding the war spoke purely and simply like the traitor of Stuttgart?

Let us say to the end what we think: Everything entitles us to

suppose that the Hitlerian poison soaked all the way through into the working class parties and the trade unions. The more one thinks of it, the plainer it becomes that certain sincere Socialists and very well-known pacifists were *unwittingly* the dupes of enemy propaganda.

But above all the poison affected bourgeois circles. International fascism had its conscious or unconscious accomplices in the political parties, among both the Conservatives and the Liberals, from Georges Bonnet to Laval and to Pierre-Etienne Flandin. And so we come to Munich, from which flowed all the evils that confront us.

These few phrases ought to be expanded, but space is limited. I will only give you in conclusion a quite recent example which shows more than long dissertations the extent to which Hitlerian propaganda had unconsciously affected the French middle class.

On the 13th June I was at Tours. That night M. Paul Reynaud made his moving appeal on the radio. In the sitting room of a big hotel in the town refugees, French bourgeois of every description, were listening, with their eyes welling with tears. Their patriotic emotion was sincere. And yet, as we were slowly leaving the room after hearing the Marseillaise, a journalist murmured a few words of comfort and in particular expressed the hope that the Russians would come in against Germany. We heard a reply that left us staggered: an old gentleman with white moustaches—a classic Colonel Blimp—could not contain his indignation at the idea that the Bolsheviks might come in on our side. We heard him growl: "What! saved by the Russians? By Gad, Sir, that would be the last straw."

I could give dozens and hundreds of authentic anecdotes of this sort.

The French bourgeoisie were eaten up with class spirit. The worst factor of the situation was that many of the country's best and most loyal servants were unconscious of this fact. Look at the two ministerial changes carried out by M. Paul Reynaud since May. They make it clear that, however great the patriotism and goodwill of the Prime Minister, political perspicacity was not his outstanding virtue. At the first change he was undoubtedly right to bring into the Government the old but fundamentally patriotic Tory, Louis Marin. But what need had he to drag in the fascist Ybarnégaray, who is an adventurer and a friend of Franco, and who started the conversations with the Ambassador Lequerica that actually prepared the capitulation. Let us say nothing about the choice of Weygand, who in the last war was a scrupulously efficient assistant of Marechal Foch, but, like so many of his colleagues, could not rid himself of the delusion that you can fight the same war twice. Let us come to the second change of Cabinet. Here the selections that were made were really inexplicable, and suggest a total lack of insight. Pétain, the extremely tired old man, already known twenty-five years ago for his pessimism, and also known for several months past to be inclined to defeatism. Boutillier, an anti-parliamentary *fonctionnaire* if ever there was one, Jean Prouvost, director of *Paris-Soir*, a representative of the great trusts of the industrial north, Paul Baudouin, representative of the Bank of Indo-China, who last year negotiated with Mussolini on behalf of Georges Bonnet, Baudouin who is a fascist, or at the very least philo-fascist. Such levity is astonishing. It is impossible to understand why, on the evening of Sunday, June 16th, "resisters" in the Reynaud ministry did not put the defeatists in the Cabinet and elsewhere under arrest. Everything might then have been saved. One month, two months of resistance, the persistent defence of the national territory up to the last inch . . . and much could have been retrieved.

But all that is past. To-day the French people are under the rule of Hitler. Anger must be rising. The people, I repeat, are sound, but if revolt were ever to break out, the Government forces, allied to those of the aggressor, would quickly restore "order"; this "order" that the French governing classes have wanted and for the sake of which they have delivered the country to foreign fascism.

For us refugees who have been welcomed by our British brothers in such touching fashion, there is only one duty; to work and to fight at their side as soldiers in the same cause. Tell the truth to the French people, the French people who will now be exposed to all the poison of lying propaganda. Show them, and go on showing them, that it is the England of Magna Carta which is to-day fighting for the France of the Rights of Man, and which will conquer.

ANGLO-FRENCH CO-OPERATION

MARSHAL PETAIN is eighty-four; in spite of Verdun he tends by nature to defeatism—in April, 1918, he wanted to make peace on the Kaiser's terms; he is an ardent Catholic and a friend of Franco. Marshal Weygand is seventy-three; he is a brilliant soldier but he is also a politician of extremely reactionary views. From the moment of Gamelin's collapse at Sedan, both Marshals were hoping to make terms with Hitler; both were saying that a long war could only lead to social revolution, which they sincerely believed to be a disaster worse for the people of France than capitulation to the Nazis. Both believed the futile nonsense that Hitler, as one soldier to another, would grant them an honourable peace after an honourable battle. Both expected that he might take back to Germany a part of Alsace-Lorraine—the Briey basin, for example—and a colony or two; but that, for the rest, he would leave France intact. Both hoped—and Baudouin, the friend and financial adviser of Mussolini, gave them warm adherence—that, within a totalitarian Europe, a Clerical Fascist France could make a Latin bloc with Italy and Spain, and be able to hold Hitler's more outrageous ambitions in effective check.

The whole conception was always as unrealistic and foolish as their conduct of the battle. Events have shown with lightning speed that these men were as bad soldiers as they were stupid politicians. Hitler has not treated them as soldier to soldier; he has not given them a generous or an honourable peace. Unless French honour is held to be compatible with the surrender to Herr Himmler of men and women to whom France had offered asylum from the concentration camp. Palming them off with a few phrases, broadcast to the German nation, about honourable defeat, he has made Erzberger seem heroic compared with the French Generals. The German civilian did not disguise defeat with catchwords in 1918. Pétain and Weygand have accepted the dishonourable, the treacherous rôle of helping him against their late allies. Hitler will not even give them the terms of peace until Great Britain has been defeated; when that has been achieved, he will be able to destroy the French Empire, to rob France herself of Alsace, Lorraine, Nice, Savoy, the Basque country, and perhaps of other provinces as well, and to have his *Gauleiter* in Paris.

This armistice will give the French people a rude awakening as its terms become gradually known. The occupation of France by Nazi troops can only lead to one inevitable result. Whatever they desire, the vast mass of the citizens of the French Republic will detest and abominate the settlement which has been made.

But there is a deeper and more important reason why the French people will not for long endure Hitler's peace.

The paramount issue in world politics to-day is the question of the total war-machine, and the place of force in the relations between the peoples of the world. The events of lasting historical significance in the last twenty years have been the experiment of the League of Nations, the failure of the Disarmament Conference, and the unsuccessful effort of world opinion to make the Government uphold the new agreements which outlawed aggressive war. However forms may change, that problem will still remain; and in a world where steam and electricity have contracted time and space, they will inevitably dominate the life of man.

On these questions there is a great gulf fixed between Hitler—and, in a lesser degree, Pétain and Weygand—on the one hand, and the people of France on the other. Hitler is the incarnation of total force. His conception of Government is a ruthless elimination of all who oppose his will, and the unlimited enslavement of the minds and bodies of those whom he rules. His "foreign policy" is based on the ethics and intellectual conception of Attila the Hun. He lives for war. His passion for it is so great that it is the only subject about which he tells the truth; it is a human impossibility that he can ever change. While his régime exists, no man in any country will be able to give his life to anything but armaments and ever-recurring war.

About the totalitarian war-machine the French Republicans—that is, the vast majority of the French people—have made up their minds. The elections of 1932 and 1936 were fought on the issue of aggression in Manchuria and Abyssinia. The parties who won them promised the French people that, if the Japanese militarists and Mussolini could be stopped, there should follow an organisation of real security, combined with real disarmament and economic co-operation for the betterment of all. The French people gave these parties a greater majority than the French Republic had known before.

The British people share this view. The peace ballot seems now to have faded into the mists of the distant past. But, like the French elections, it remains an event of lasting significance. It not only drove Simon and Hoare from office; it not only compelled the Tory Party to promise in the General Election that Mussolini would be stopped and Abyssinia saved; it showed that the British people had reached definite and firmly rooted conclusions about the kind of international social order which they desired to see. In these conclusions, they are in deep and unbreakable agreement with the people of France.

It is for these reasons that I believe in the possibility of an Anglo-French Union in Foreign Affairs. Such a union will have infinite difficulties to face, when it deals with many financial, social, and

economic questions; but on armament policy, on the prevention of war; on the replacement of force in international affairs by the rule of law, no serious disagreement should be encountered. Whatever the Marshals of France may try to do, such a union can be formed when Hitler has been destroyed. And when it has been formed, I believe it will secure such support from the other nations of Europe and the world that the sufferings of this war shall not have been in vain.

P. J. NOEL-BAKER

THE ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF FRENCH COLONIES

WITH the subjugation of France, great industrial resources have passed out of the control of the Allies. But there remains the French overseas empire; and it is worth while to take rough stock of its resources, which can still be in large measure retained if immediate steps are taken to defend them, in spite of the Bordeaux Government's order that they be surrendered to enemy control. The economic resources of the French possessions are, of course, in no way comparable with those of the British Empire; but they are very considerable; and in a war in which iron and the non-ferrous metals occupy a key position, their importance cannot be lightly regarded. Moreover, if French North Africa can be retained, and the way to and from it kept open, there are all the advantages of a short voyage to be taken into account. To Italy, the economic resources of French Africa would be a godsend; they could be the making of the Italian metal industry, which is at present almost wholly lacking in home-produced materials and dependent for its supplies on a Germany which has little surplus to dispose of. Negatively as well as positively, it is of the greatest economic importance to prevent the French Empire from falling into the enemy's hands.

The greater part of the French Empire lies in Africa. There it may be grouped into four areas, of which North Africa is the most important. That consists of Algeria and French Morocco, each with a population of between 6 and 6½ millions, and Tunisia, with nearly 2½ million inhabitants. The next two areas are French West Africa, nearly half as large again as French North Africa, with about the same number of inhabitants, but with fewer economic resources; and French Equatorial Africa, considerable in area but more thinly peopled. French West Africa and Equatorial Africa surround the British possessions on the West Coast. The island of Madagascar and some smaller dependencies make up the fourth group. Outside Africa the principal French possessions are grouped in the Union known as French Indo-China, lying South of China and East of Siam. There are also French mandated territories in and near Syria, some comparatively small colonies in America, and some islands, not without importance, in Oceania. For our present purpose there is no need to draw distinctions between colonies, protectorates, mandates and other forms of government.

The greater part of the trade of the French Empire has been with France itself, to which the colonies have sent three-quarters of their exports and from which they have taken two-thirds of their imports. France in turn has done an increasing trade with the French Empire, which in 1929 took 19 per cent. of French exports and supplied 12 per cent. of French imports, while in 1938 the proportion of each had risen to 27 per cent. No other European country trades so extensively with its overseas dependencies, unless we include the trade of Great Britain with the Dominions. The increase in trade between France and the French Empire has followed an increased development of colonial resources.

While some of the French possessions are considerable producers of foodstuffs, the total food available for export from them does not form more than a quite small part of world food exports or of such exports available to the United Kingdom. About one-eighth of the world's exports of cocoa comes from French Equatorial Africa, including the Cameroons and French Togoland. In recent years French Indo-China has shipped annually more than half a million tons of rice to France. Madagascar exports a substantial amount of coffee and of meat. Of vegetable oil-seeds and nuts, a fair proportion comes from French West Africa, mainly in the form of groundnuts and palm kernels: but the production of the former is considerably greater in India, and of the latter in Nigeria. Indo-China produces some tea and Algeria a little tobacco.

The main economic importance of the French Empire, especially in time of war, lies in its minerals. The principal sources of phosphates, which are the basis of essential fertilisers, are the United States, the U.S.S.R. and French North Africa, especially French Morocco. Those three areas between them, in about equal shares, account for nine-tenths or more of the world production.

Even more immediately important, for war purposes, are the metal ores of the French Empire. The production of iron ore in French North Africa is considerable. In 1938 the iron content of the ores mined was estimated to amount to 1,640,000 metric tons from Algeria, 460,000 from Tunisia and 140,000 from Morocco. This total of nearly 2¼ million tons exceeded in quantity, if not in quality, the output from Spain and amounted to about two-thirds of the British output during the same year. It may be noticed that Italy has little iron ore: the iron content of her output in 1938 was slightly over half a million tons. She has also been an importer of ferro-alloys and of nickel, essential elements in the production of armaments. Of those alloys French North Africa has a considerable supply, which would go some way to meet Italian requirements. Of molybdenum, for instance, Italy imported some 200 tons in 1938; and the output from French Morocco was of at least half that quantity. So, too, Algeria and French Morocco produce antimony; and tungsten, though not found in French North Africa, is a product of Indo-China, whose 1938 output of some 591 tons of metal would have covered the Italian imports several times over. French North Africa also produces some manganese and cobalt, from Morocco, and substantial quantities of lead and zinc. Italy produces both those metals, but also imports them. The output of them from Algeria would more than cover her import requirements.

There remains to be mentioned an outlying island of the French Empire, New Caledonia, lying between Queensland and Fiji, about a thousand miles from Sydney. Her output of nickel ore, though hardly comparable with the immense supplies from Canada, is the second largest in the world. She will no doubt find a ready customer in the growing and enterprising metal industry of Australia. So, too, in the case of chrome ore, of which her annual output of some twenty or thirty thousand tons constitutes an appreciable proportion of the world supply.

Let us summarise our conclusions. Some tropical produce of the French Empire, such as cocoa, rice, coffee and vegetable nuts, serves merely to supplement larger supplies from other sources. Far more important are the phosphates and iron ores of French North Africa, constituting, with some base metals and certain scarce and valuable ferro-alloys, both an invaluable aid to the war effort against Germany and a tempting bait for the Italian aggressor. To them may be added, not without regard to the Australian metal industry, the tungsten of Indo-China and the nickel and chrome of New Caledonia.

G. R. MITCHISON

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BANK OF ENGLAND, LONDON,
24th June, 1940.

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(*continued from page* 796)

Practical action will not be easy, but no stone ought to be left unturned to save those who for years have been the *avant-garde* in the fight for democracy.

W. SCHIFF,
For the Council of Austrians in Great Britain

THE FACTORY WORKER

SIR,—I am a factory worker. The extra hours we are now working are to an unnecessary extent being wasted; men are idling because they are not being given the work to do. This is probably partly due to factors unknown to us lower-grade workers, but it is also due to reasons which we could very easily point out to the management and staff who have the power to remedy them. But the management cannot consult the lower grades for fear of loss of authority, the lower grades will not give their advice spontaneously for fear of appearing presumptuous or offending their fellow workers by what might seem to be tale-bearing.

The remedy lies in a third party, a government-paid go-between, chosen from and speaking in the idiom and accents of the lower grades, with power to consult them unaccompanied by representatives of the management. He must have sufficient intelligence to distinguish between mere grousing—he will encounter plenty of this—and genuine causes of inefficiency, and he must have sufficient tact to enable him to present a report free from offensive suggestions—however true—of inefficiency on the part of the management and in no way hinting at the direct source of his information or implicating any particular worker or group of workers.

This matter is urgent. Not only to prevent waste of time, but waste of materials as well, for which the lower grade workers are largely responsible.

London. V. B.

SUPPLY

SIR,—Your remarks regarding hours, wages and profits can be multiplied many times.

Until the beginning of the war I had a non-ferrous ingot business. The cost of manufacture, including profit, from raw material was £7–£9 per ton. The Ministry of Supply controls the price of the raw material, but not the price of the ingots. Demand has far exceeded supply and the margin has been, since about November, £15–£18 per ton. The Government takes 100 per cent. excess profit, but the business (commercial) man having been born and bred in a "manufacture for profit" world cannot adjust himself to the idea of manufacture for use, and so we find a waste of both time and material as the maximum profit that can be taken out of the business is assured.

The only reasonable solution would be to take the business out of the hands of the commercial man: he is in any case redundant in a "manufacture for use" world, and hand it over to the technical staff who are accustomed to work for a fixed salary. We should then be able to have co-operation and friendly rivalry between various works manufacturing the same class of goods.

Two other small businesses I know well; one having made no profit since 1923 is now showing a substantial profit, and the other has made substantial losses for the past five years. The manager, who is also a director, having received not more than £350 per annum, was very eloquent on the inequality of some of his workers receiving £10–£12 per week, but quite forgot the fact that the changed conditions have brought up his salary, bonus and dividend to £1,200 or thereabouts.

These cases are within my personal knowledge and the last two could be substantiated with balance sheets.

"Go to it" says Mr. Morrison. What is "it" in a business world where maximum profits are assured—which means the only incentive that most business men have for being in business at all is removed—or are they keeping their businesses together for the profit scramble after the war?

54 Fellows Lane, H. HILDITCH
Harborne, Birmingham, 17.

THE ERRORS OF THE LEFT

SIR,—When you say in your leader in the issue of June 22nd, 1940, "This has been the fate of the critics of the National Government—to ask for the best and to have enough influence to produce only the worst," I think you are expressing a truth that goes far deeper than possibly even you would admit

We of the Left are all of us to-day writhing with bitterness to think that our prophecies have come true, and in our anger we turn upon the nearest object of that anger, the Old Gang. We often fail, I believe, to recognise that we have constantly demanded of the Old Gang a standard of intuition and intelligence which we, least of all, have a right to expect of it. It is not the Old Gang that is to blame if the Left has during the last two decades thrown away successively the chances offered by the progressive decay of capitalism—it is the Left itself.

In my opinion it is this recurring tendency of the Left to pillory its *opponents* at the moment of its own most disastrous failures that has brought war and destruction upon Europe, and nothing can save us but the honest and manly recognition of *our own* errors rather than those of a class which we have declared is doomed by its very position in the social structure. TREVOR BLEWITT

6 Rutland House,
16 Belsize Avenue, N.W.3.

AMERICA'S SECRETARY FOR WAR

SIR,—Memories are so short that the appointment of Mr. Stimson as U.S. Secretary for War will probably remind comparatively few that it was he who tried at the beginning of 1932 to prevent the consummation of the rape of Manchuria, relying for support on all the Powers (except Japan) who signed the Nine Power Treaty, but especially on Britain. Mr. Stimson was at that time Secretary of State, and his opposite number in Britain was Sir John Simon. But Sir John, apparently inspired by nothing better than a desire to administer a snub, said, when compelled to take notice, that he had the Japanese assurance that Japan had no designs against either the Open Door or China's territorial integrity, so he proposed to do nothing at all. He gained ecstatic praise in Japan, but he drove the first nail into the coffin of the League of Nations. He certainly made history that day.

As Lord Chancellor he is unlikely to be able to indulge in any malign activity. I wish I could find consolation in the fact that the Japanese will feel chagrin at seeing their "enemy" at the Washington War Office and their "friend" in the background. I think rather of what a different world it might be to-day if Sir John Simon had risen to the lead given by Henry Stimson. A. MORGAN YOUNG

COMMON CITIZENSHIP

SIR,—The offer of Union to France came too late for adequate comment in your last issue. Already it has faded into the background. I should like, however, to make one point.

Whatever the motives for the offer, it is quite clear now that only through a constitutional union, with common citizenship and a written constitution, can there be any complete certainty of common action and mutual security in the face of all dangers. Federal Union has often been criticised as being a paper plan. The "realists" have argued that instead of worrying about common government we must build up joint administrative institutions, in fact that we must do anything but the one sensible thing which would have prevented the present disaster.

This offer of Union has now made it quite clear that no amount of interlocking administrative machinery is sufficient. Common citizenship and a common set of laws and a common legislature are essential. Every nation in Europe has now learned that promises between Governments, however solemnly undertaken and pompously worded and however much embellished with interlocking administrative machinery, are worth nothing, if the separate Governments still have the power and the constitutional right to take separate decisions.

It has to be recalled that the Solemn Declaration of the Supreme War Council on March 28 promised not only no separate peace but also community of action after the war was over. Federal Union News at that time pointed out the dangers in that Solemn Declaration. The leading article in the *Times* commenting on that Declaration suggested that it was the British Government which had persuaded the French not to press for a formally constituted Union. If the *Times* was right, then the British Government were not slow to learn their lesson. Unfortunately, they learned it too late. Now we have got to see to it that when the Peace Treaty comes to be made, this lesson is not forgotten and we are not put off by any pettifogging scheme providing for machinery, but for no centre of government. C. D. KIMBER,
Federal Union, General Secretary
44 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1.

THE NAZI MACHINE

SIR,—I am sorry to see that in defending Capt. Liddell Hart's strategical theories, the writer of "A London Diary" encourages the overgrown myth of Germany's overwhelming and irresistible mechanised forces. Though they exceeded those of the Allies, perhaps by three to one as he says (which I doubt), the Allied forces could have resisted the German advance but for treachery and demoralisation. It is well known that the B.E.F. forces were kept in retreat because of the breaking-up of their Allies' lines; anyhow, if this is not well known, it should be. Not only is it untrue that the Allies had no light guns to penetrate the armour of German tanks, but the best German tanks were inferior to the French and British though more numerous. If we want a military explanation of the German conquest of France, apart from the chief reasons already mentioned, it was in their greater competence. The best-informed British officers back from France agree that the Germans are inferior as fighters to the Germans of the last war, but their cunning tactics, and their remarkable organisation (especially of "Fifth Column" activities) were far beyond anything the Allies could achieve.

I will mention two examples described to me by a senior officer. First, concerning the tank attacks. The Germans showed us how to stop tanks with machine guns or rifles, by firing at the tractors and so bringing them to a halt. They always did it to our tanks. Once a tank tractor is torn off, the tank is immobilised. The Germans were instructed beforehand what to do if faced by a tank offensive. As for our light anti-tank guns, on one very critical occasion our men were unable to stop a German advance because they had been compelled to take shrapnel instead of explosive shells for the guns, presumably because the base headquarters couldn't find or had run short of explosive shells. Second, concerning the "Fifth Column" methods employed. Several examples have been published here, but not this one, I think, and this is the one to watch out for if Britain is severely bombed. Over and over, our retreating brigades, when they stayed for the night anywhere, were accurately bombed. When the German bombers came over, Verey lights were fired at three points of a triangle inside which was the force to be bombed. At night the Trojan horsemen—probably wearing British battledress—who fired the signal lights could not be identified. They were usually a little distance from the camp or billets that constituted the enemy's target.

Savage Club. R. L. MEGROZ

REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE

SIR,—While agreeing with the theoretical part of Mr. Richards's article, "Towards a Regional Architecture," which appeared in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of June 8th, I should like to point out that Mr. Richards has chosen rather a bad example to demonstrate his theory. In sharing the enthusiasm of the newly published book by A. Whittick for Eric Mendelsohn's work in Palestine, Mr. Richards lets himself be deceived by just the same showiness which he condemns in Mendelsohn's previous buildings in Germany. Mendelsohn has, for instance, not abandoned the use of showy staircases leading to nowhere. In Dr. Weizmann's villa in Rechoboth the imposing staircase, the obvious centre of the house, does not lead, as one would expect it to do, to a big assembly-hall or the like, but to a maid's small room.

Having lived in Palestine myself, I think that the Palestinian public does not consider Mendelsohn as having been particularly successful in representing the native traditions and craftsmanship of the country. The application, for instance, of a very heavy Arabic saucer dome to a light reinforced concrete canopy supported by equally slendee columns is just as wrong and descending to pastichr as putting a Greek entablature or a thatched roof on top of a modern factory or hospital building. Besides which, it is not very helpful, assuming one wants to be national, to introduce a typical Arabic feature to an important representative Hebrew building.

Evidently, however, one cannot expect, even from an excellent architect like Mendelsohn, to adapt himself immediately after his arrival to the spirit and culture of a foreign country. H. PARNES

90 Canfield Gardens, N.W.6.

Current Literature

A WINTER IN ARABIA

ARABIA and the study of the Beduin have created an aristocracy of travel among the English. An imagination has been awakened here which in India is overcome by the exotic and is torpid elsewhere. The rewards of Arabia are to the spirit and the brain; the desert fills no pockets, creates no merchant princes. The only material advantage an Englishman may obtain is the intangible prestige which comes from winning valuable points in the perpetual debate of military and naval intrigue and strategy; beyond that he is disinterested. And those who have been extending the Imperial influence eastwards from Aden into the Hadhramaut during the last two or three years as a quiet counterstroke to the Italians in East Africa, have done so without acquiring the grosser traits or iron mask of the exploiter. Their curious task turns our Arabians into a kind of priesthood with a mystique which, for the sensitive, appears to supersede the reality of the task itself; and all the Arabian travellers, from the imaginative Doughty and T. E. Lawrence to the contentious Philby and the subtler Freya Stark, write sooner or later as if they had taken monastic vows; they make renunciations, the spirit is travelling with the gabbling brotherhood of Islam, mortifying the flesh and worshipping necessity. The traveller in Arabia is inevitably dedicated to poverty and asceticism, conditions always recognised to be fertile in saintliness and propitious to spiritual development, because they simplify living. Further East the English Buddha-addicts seek the Way of Life; what attracts our Anglo-Arabians is a way of living. They have experienced only the profound nostalgia of the civilised and safe for the primitive and heroic. Romantically attracted by the liberty of the Bedouin, they have come to realise that this liberty is conditioned by a paradox: Bedouin anarchy can exist only because of religious and tribal despotism and Bedouin liberty is not a freedom to choose—which is how we understand liberty—but the acceptance of necessity. What is enviable in the Beduin's life springs precisely from this—as Miss Freya Stark points out in her new book *A Winter in Arabia* (John Murray, 16*s*.)—that having no choice of alternatives, he cannot choose the second best. Here civilisation gives us a fatal opportunity which pastoral and unsettled man has never learned.

This is the blank wall to which the Arabian journeys lead. Arabia is one of the fatal countries. For the Western European and in its own manner, it belongs to that group of outcasts and survivals, Russia, Spain and Ireland, which inflame the imagination and wreck the mind and heart; and the history of those who, because of some atavism, because they are "tired" of civilisation, have attempted in some degree to immolate themselves in Arabia, is one of despair, disillusion and guilt—despair because it is ultimately impossible for civilised man to go back to the virtues of the nomad, disillusion because the price would be the acceptance of the nomad's vices, and political guilt because the presence of civilised man means the infection and destruction of the virtues the Arab esteems and which one admires in him, and above all the destruction of that feeling for liberty which one chiefly envies. Such a guilt notoriously poisoned the post-Arabian period of T. E. Lawrence's life; but its effects were not altogether negative. His attempt to practise some of the virtues of monasticism in England—poverty, suffering, self-discipline, self-immolation—had a prophetic quality which the young were quick to appreciate; and who can deny that in the modern world, the appeal of restraint, the denial of freedom of choice, the acceptance of authority, the promise of suffering, have attracted as great a response as the appeal of liberty? Indeed, it is argued that only by accepting these things is liberty attained.

The Arabian travellers have interested us because they described an austerity of life which finds its compensation in a luscious imagination, and a fanatical dogma made humane by the richness of its local casuistry; and within the austerity of the desert they found a hospitality which was at once a regulated science and intimately human. It had seemed a completely male world until Miss Freya Stark's travels in the Hadhramaut. Like fragments of Picasso in the wadis on the old incense road of Arabia, the towns of the Hadhramaut disclosed a life still riddled by tribal war, banditry and the blood feud. The nomad was at the gates, yet there was a tradition of settled life which made these towns especially suited to the leisured sensibility of the woman traveller. Illness, the dread of travel, is often travel's best friend. Freya Stark's helplessness and her courage made friends for her, and illness, with its crawl from minute to minute, became like a microscope in her hand, revealing a detail which might otherwise have been lost. She had a double advantage; she saw the Hadhramaut from the male company of the road and the female company of the harim.

The dangers which had shortened her earlier journeys were less in 1937, the year of *A Winter in Arabia*, when the three years' peace—the Ingrams or English peace, it was called—had stopped the tribal wars. If someone stole 42 camels a town now refrained from shooting up its neighbour but—reluctantly and keeping an open mind about the experiment—permitted the R.A.F. to do the job.

Always interested in new methods of killing people, the population carried open-mindedness about the R.A.F. to curious lengths. A bombed village is delighted to return all unexploded bombs to the Force; and if there is criticism, it appears to be the usual one that "a man cannot now do what he likes with his own," meaning that he cannot shoot his neighbours if they rob him, and that the R.A.F. does not drop enough bombs because public opinion in England prevents it. Sin, in other words, has improved chances since virtue has become compulsory. In yet other words, "the fox loves it." Miss Stark, with some regret, one feels, is on the side of the law. "What news?' cried a bored Bedouin from a rock as she went by. "No murders—no news," replied her servant sadly.

In this year she went with archaeologists to Hureidha, to winter there. While Science dug, Art observed. It was an experience which went to the heart of the question of travel. The last thing the scientists wanted was immolation; they were not prepared to shed themselves so that they might experience the Hadhramaut and its people to the full, or enjoy morbid refinements of irony:

> The beauty of our moonlight, too, is mixed with a concentrated smell of donkey from the stable below; it seems to grow in potency with the advancing hours of night and reminds them (the Scientists) of typhoid, which is a pity, for it might just as well awaken happier associations, such as the beginning of the Christian religion.

Vainly, when Qasim the servant was caught straining the soup through his old and dirty turban, did Miss Stark attempt to turn the archaeologists to a philosophical resignation with the Arab story of the Angel of Death, a story which, in one form or other, is found all over the East. A man in Jerusalem saw the Angel of Death staring at him in a pointed way and, on King Solomon's advice, at once fled to India. The King reproached the Angel for the tactlessness of his glances and the Angel replied: "I was looking at him with no unlucky intention. I was merely surprised to see him in Jerusalem, for I have been ordered to fetch him from India in three weeks' time."

This philosophy is suited to a country where the cure for gallstone is to be rubbed with ground glass and butter until the stone comes out—a method on which it would have been interesting to hear Montaigne—yet Science itself had peculiar blind spots. Miss Stark returned one day to find the hygienic archaeologists had turned the W.C. into a kitchen.

The stay at Shibam, where the presence of archaeologists suggested opportunities of blackmail and political capital to thoughtful inhabitants, gave Miss Stark the opportunity to reflect upon the qualities essential to the traveller: a good temper, a capacity to accept values and to judge by standards other than our own; the rapid judgment of character, the love of nature including human nature, the power to dissociate oneself from one's bodily sensations; a knowledge of the local history and language; a leisurely and uncensorious mind; a tolerable constitution and the capacity to eat and sleep at any moment. "And lastly, especially here, a ready quickness in repartee." Miss Stark had all these, except perhaps good health, but her illnesses were, as I have said, advantageous. They brought curious visitors to her bedside, a kind of queenly power which the sick are commonly given. In repartee, the delight of the Arabs, she was superb. Among the five reasons for travel which were given to her by Sayyid Abdulla, a watchmaker, was one with fundamental implications: to practise good manners. This, above all, Miss Stark understood perfectly.

It was Ramadhan when the party was at Shibam. At night, the donkeys stank to heaven, the windows of those Lhasa-like houses were lighted and the sound of singing and feasting went on until the drummers beat their tattoo in the streets to warn the faithful that the dawn was near. From her bed Miss Stark managed with astonishing resourcefulness the old lady who had stolen her jewels, watched politics creep into family quarrels, heard of the love affairs of Qasim, a poetical and susceptible man who was a bad cook and had the eye of the devout for sin. Picking up a piece of striated limestone curved in alternate pink and white, his mind jumped at once to the nearest wicked image. "This is bacon," he said. The Arab humour was the salt of her journeys. In the early days, they were crossing the Jōl in a car called a "Rugby" which had a tomato tin for its radiator cap; and after the driver had stopped many times to walk rather than risk the car down the hairpin bends of the gorges, Sayyid Mehdar remarked briefly: "You like antiquities. Why not this car?" The Hadhramaut, where so many neighbours had killed one another, was thought by those who knew Malay and Java—there is some emigration to these places—to be superior, because although Malay was "more restful" the Hadhramaut had the advantage of being full of one's relations.

Miss Stark's narrative has a fascination comparable to that of a Jane Austen novel, for the scene is small, the life and interests are intense and they are seen through a woman's eyes and with the irony which comes of accepting human nature. She has written part of her book in diary form, but later on, when she leaves Hureidha and the scientists and travels alone further westward through the country of Al Dhiyaib, she writes a continuous narrative. This journey, dangerous and original, brings out the hardened traveller. Mr. Philby has described how he was always mobbed in the Hadhramaut; how much more a woman. Five thousand people had pursued her at the "races," willing to tear her to pieces in their enthusiasm

for sightseeing. Among the primitive tribesmen she was still an exhibit:

> The men of the Ba Qutmi come walking by with unechoing tread on the sand, leading their camels, and rest their guns against a tree to talk beside the travellers' fires.
>
> "May one sit near her?" they ask when they see me. And then: "Where did you pick her up?" They turn to Salik. "And who brought her?" meaning from which tribe did they take me over.
>
> And when these matters have been settled, while they sit cleaning out cartridge cases to fill with lotion for their eyes, they ask for news in their beduin way, saying, "What is the war in your wadi?"

The English peace had taken away their war; they were bewildered. With pleasure they sparred with and slyly questioned one of the most ingenious and ready witted of our Arabians, Jane Austen serene among the blood-feuds as Mary Kingsley was on the Congo. Now Government itself is bombed.

V. S. PRITCHETT

PROBLEMS OF GENIUS

Perilous Balance. The Tragic Genius of Swift, Johnson and Sterne. By W. B. C. WATKINS. *Oxford University Press.* 12s.

Matthew Prior. Poet and Diplomatist. By CHARLES KENNETH EVES. *Oxford University Press.* 26s. 6d.

It is in the crevices and dark crannies of the human mind, rather than on its smooth unbroken surfaces, that the seeds of literary genius are most often rooted. Great writers (at least since the inception of the Romantic movement) are usually great neurasthenics: and, as if to remind us, not for the first time, that the Age of Reason was in some respects as unreasonable and nerve-ridden as any succeeding or preceding period, Mr. Watkins has composed a scholarly study around the spiritual disabilities and physical sufferings of three masters of eighteenth-century English prose. He has no difficulty in demonstrating that Swift, Johnson, Sterne were all three unhappy and unbalanced men. But then the question arises what we mean by happiness: whether standards of normality are not strictly relative and the concept of the "normal" man an entirely fictitious one, with little bearing on the actual conditions of human existence. May not consciousness itself be a kind of malady—a morbid by-product of inanimate matter? These and many other general problems are raised but not dealt with by Mr. Watkins, whose book remains interesting and inconclusive. Is he attempting to show that literary sensitiveness is a neurotic condition, or does he regard the neuroses of his subjects as purely incidental? Would they have written better had they been less neurotic: or was the equilibrium that they established on the aesthetic plane closely connected with the lack of balance that distinguished their personal lives?

Both Mr. Watkins' method and manner are somewhat academic; and now and then he produces the sort of phrase which, although it looks well enough in the student's notebook and has an impressive ring across the university lecture room, proves to be almost meaningless if carefully analysed. The statement, for example, that "comedy is concerned primarily with man's limitations, tragedy with his potentialities" adds nothing to Mr. Watkins' essay on Swift and seems doubly ineffective since he is obliged to contradict it in the sentence that follows. But the book is so thoroughly documented as to deserve attention. Though the excursion on Swift is too brief to be useful, the sections that concern Sterne and Johnson are long and interesting. With the help of many admirable quotations, Mr. Watkins builds up a convincing portrait of the great critic who in discussing the work of others applied standards of the most rigorous common sense, but, in his own existence, was distracted by a host of phantoms—a deep feeling of personal unworthiness (in which, if in little else, he resembled Coleridge) and, worse still, a haunting fear of death and the after-life. Superficially the sanest of English writers (continually on the lookout for cant and humbug), Johnson grew old in the tormented conviction that at any moment his sanity might desert him and he would plunge head over heels into the gulf of madness. Apparently the most sociable of human beings, delighted with small daily domestic pleasures—a coach-ride, an expedition, a family dinner party—he was the victim of an atrocious melancholia that made it intolerable for him to be left alone. Bodily robust and physically fearless, he experienced recurrent attacks of that appalling lassitude (so well known in the literary annals of a succeeding generation)—*accidie*, the scourge of poets and mystics. His *Prayers and Meditations* reveal some of the subterfuges he employed in his effort to dissipate "that weariness which hangs always flagging upon the vacant mind." And, to this end, he would sometimes dabble in chemistry, furnishing "the garret over his chambers in the Inner Temple . . . with an alembic, with retorts, receivers, and other vessels adapted to the cheapest and least operose processes," weigh the leaves that he had gathered from his vine to calculate the weight they lost by drying, or keep a meticulous record of the growth of his finger-nails.

It has been suggested, on very insufficient evidence, that Johnson's melancholia and sense of guilt may have been derived from an early period of dissipation when he had roamed London and its stews and drinking-dens in Savage's company. To this it can only be objected that not all rakes and debauchees are unhappy men and that (though it is known that he was the friend and adviser of prostitutes whom, like Mr. Gladstone, he used to pick up to hear their stories) we have no reason to suppose him particularly dissipated. His chance remark to Boswell seems much nearer the truth. "I have inherited (he said) a vile melancholy from my father which has made me mad all my life, at least not sober." The mental disorders that troubled him were beyond the scope of reason, lodged in the farthest recesses of his personal temperament. But the result was a horror and a fear of life, which he sought to counterbalance by a strenuous enjoyment of ordinary living. When Mrs. Williams opined that certain gentlemen drank far too much and observed that she wondered what pleasure men could take in making beasts of themselves, "I wonder, Madam (retorted Johnson) that you have not penetration enough to see the strong inducement to this excess; for he who makes a *beast* of himself gets rid of the pains of being a man."

To these morbid peculiarities of his spiritual make-up can no doubt be traced many of his literary prejudices. His distrust of literary extravagance in any form is based on his fear of the imagination, which in his devotional jottings he had described as "wicked" and "depraved," "tyrannous," "sinful and corrupt." "His imagination (wrote Tyers) often appeared to be too mighty for the control of reason." He explained to Mrs. Burney that, if over-indulged, imagination might lead straight to madness; and, because he dreaded its effect on his mental stability, he professed to consider it an "obstinate disease of the intellect, of which, when it has once become radicated by time, the remedy is one of the hardest tasks of reason and virtue" . . . To such scruples, such fears and such moral forebodings, Laurence Sterne, with all his sensitiveness, remained a stranger. Yet he, too, must be regarded as an abnormal man: and the fortitude with which he jested at the approach of death and the astonishing courage with which he sought to combat it were coloured by the feverish gaiety of the doomed consumptive. Mr. Watkins makes an interesting reference from Sterne's constant awareness of death to his literary preoccupation with the idea of time—a preoccupation also found in the work of another chronic invalid, the novelist of *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*. It moved Sterne to magnificent passages of romantic prose:

> I will not argue the matter: time wastes too fast: every letter I trace tells me with what rapidity Life follows my pen; the days and hours of it, more precious, my dear Jenny! than the rubies about thy neck, are flying over our heads like light clouds of a windy day, never to return more—every thing presses on—whilst thou art twisting that lock,—see! it grows grey; and every time I kiss thy hand to bid adieu, and every absence which follows it, are preludes to that eternal separation which we are shortly to make.—Heaven have mercy upon us both!

It determined, moreover, the actual structure of his writing, his system of description and his tricks of portraiture.

The genius of Swift and Sterne and Johnson was developed in a struggle against tremendous odds: it is to their infirmities that we appear to owe their greatness. . . . Matthew Prior was neither a great nor an unhappy man; and a new biography by an American writer, Mr. Charles Kenneth Eves, tells us as much as we need to know of him—diplomatist, poetaster, man of pleasure. He was not a good poet, but he had delightful moments: and the best verses he ever wrote (to add further point to Mr. Watkins' study) are, without any question, the most haunted and desperate. They were inscribed on the fly-leaf of Mézeray's history:

> Whate'er thy Countrymen have done
> By Law and Wit, by Sword and Gun,
> In Thee is faithfully recited:
> And all the Living World, that view
> Thy Work, give Thee the Praises due,
> At once Instructed and Delighted.
>
> Yet for the Fame of all these Deeds,
> What Beggar in the *Invalides*,
> With Lameness broke, with Blindness smitten
> Wished ever decently to die,
> To have been either Mézeray,
> Or any Monarch He has written?
>
> It strange, dear Author, yet it true is,
> That down from Pharamond to Louis,
> All covet Life, yet call it Pain:
> All feel the Ill, yet shun the Cure:
> Can sense this Paradox endure?
> Resolve me, Cambray, or Fontaine.
>
> The Man in graver Tragic known
> (Tho' his best Part long since was done)
> Still on the Stage desires to tarry:
> And He who play'd the *Harlequin*,
> After the Jest still loads the scene,
> Unwilling to retire, tho' weary.

Walter Scott had particular fondness for these lines and, on a journey, once repeated them to Lockhart "without break or hesitation." It was evident from the deep emotion with which he rendered them that he applied Prior's verses to the declining days of his own existence.

PETER QUENNELL

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expanded tract than an impartial history. Beginning with John Law and his unfortunate monetary experiments in France at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Professor Rist traces the divergent theories and practices which have marked the subsequent evolution of British and French banking. His book is written very much from the standpoint of a French banker; for is he not himself the economist of the Banque de France? From this point of vantage he is very critical of the ideas underlying the British banking tradition; and, as one would expect of a Frenchman, the root of his mistrust of the British tradition lies in his devotion to gold as the basis of all sound money.

Professor Rist's difference of approach from that to which English readers are accustomed comes out especially in his handling of the great controversy which raged in Great Britain in the first half of the nineteenth century between the adherents of the Currency and Banking Schools. In his review of this struggle, which culminated in the triumph of the Currency School, embodied in the Bank Charter Act of 1844, Professor Rist is all against the Ricardians, and all on the side of Tooke and Fullarton, from whose works he makes extensive and telling quotations. In his view, what was wrong about the Currency School was its exclusive belief, derived from Ricardo, in a highly simplified quantity theory of money, which practically ignored the velocity of circulation and involved a fatal confusion between currency and credit instruments based upon currency. Money and banknotes are to him two totally different things: the use of banknotes is exactly the same as that of cheques or bank deposits—to facilitate the circulation of money and not to provide an additional kind of money. Accordingly, it is an error to fix the quantity of banknotes by law, for the effect of this is to place a rigid limit upon the supply of one particular medium of circulating credit only. There is no valid reason for limiting the supply of banknotes to a fixed total that would not apply equally to limiting the amount of bills of exchange or bank deposits. The essential thing is convertibility—a definite relationship of currency and credit alike to a commodity which is itself a store of value and not merely an instrument of circulation.

Obviously this view of Professor Rist's comes much more natural to a Frenchman than to an Englishman of to-day, because of the very different place which banknotes still hold in the processes of business exchange in France. But we English may well remember that the only reason why the Bank Charter Act of 1844 did not impose a permanently deflationary pressure on the British economy was that, faced with a rigidity in the supply of notes, we resorted to alternative instruments of circulation—cheques; to say nothing of the fact that the supply of gold increased within a few years of the passing of the Act far beyond the anticipations of its sponsors. G. D. H. COLE

TWENTIETH CENTURY COBBETT

English Ways. By JACK HILTON. *Cape.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Jack Hilton is an English working-man who, in company with his wife and wheeling a perambulator, went in 1939 on a six months' journey from Rochdale to London and back through the western counties. This book is a record of his journey; it is introduced by Middleton Murry and embellished by photographs by Dixon Scott. It is the most continuously interesting account of modern England that I have read, the best thing of its kind since *Rural Rides*. The interest lies in its peculiar mixture of information and comment, the former curious, the latter varying from acid to mellow and from ingenious to profound, but always admirably intelligent. Thus we learn that a roadman is hailed by fifty tramps a day; that slum dwellers really like the new housing estates, though the higher rents mean that they are poorer; that the conversation of the average village spinster over the age of 60 is of the sweetness of pinks and of sweet williams; that some old men pensioned by their firms as well as by the State enjoy a golden age of leisure and content before they die; that men who work in Widnes factories eat pickled herrings; that Yorkshiremen are "the best of all Englishmen; even so high as to equal Irishmen in generosity"—that though Bristol is a prosperous town as towns go, 40,000 people were living there, in a boom period before the war, in acute poverty, unable adequately to nourish their children; that Devonshire is declining "into a June to September bed-and-breakfast-land"; that "the grand light that is over the county" of Buckinghamshire is its greatest charm; that Exeter is the only English city of the many visited in which the cinema audiences are animated and freely express their emotional responses, and much more of the same and every other kind.

The author makes some odd mistakes; for example, it is not true that the walls in the Yorkshire dales fail to perform their function of preventing the sheep from straying, and it is emphatically not true that Pope is the poet of those whose "own skins are their gods, respectability their religion."

The most curious thing about Mr. Hilton is his attitude to intellectuals. Professionally, he does not hold with them, preferring the middle-class industrialists, "bad-mammoned beasts as they often are," apparently on the ground that their closeness to life in the raw and common vulgarity brings them nearer to the working classes whom they exploit, while the intellectuals though "'with' are not 'of' the workers." Not unnaturally in the light of this judgment, Mr. Hilton is anxious to represent himself as a defiant lowbrow who can "stick out a few bars of Bach and Beethoven," but enjoys himself "more with grumpy Dr. Johnson, Fielden (Fielding?) Gorki and Burns, and with Schubert's music. Whenever I'm with the intellectuals, I always feel they do not belong to my world." Even about this declaration there is, it is obvious, something amiss. Lowbrows are not usually to be seen reading Gorki or Burns or listening to Schubert. Noting the point, the reader presently finds his worst suspicions confirmed; Mr. Hilton is himself an intellectual. There is scarcely one of the creature's tastes which he does not seem to share. When he calls on the parson, he hopes he will have claret in his cellar. When he sees a suburb of well-housed, well paid, comfortable working people, he complains "I see that nothing has been solved. I am sure that they are mediocre. They are just eating, sleeping and tread-milling through life." He hates, as only an intellectual can hate, the routine processes and mass production of modern industry on the ground that, though the hours are short and the work is light, its uniformity produces a human robot "roboting with the mechanical robot, hour after hour, day after day, week after week, year after year, doing the same mindless performance."

As an intellectual, he laments the disappearance of the old crafts, and complains of "modern men, riding or walking briskly, and yet having their personalities shut up and silent." And how he hates the tastes of the "robotised shut up" men to whom "racehorse tips, competition guides, coupons, sports chatter, beer, Mariene Dresliene hats, permanent waves, gum-chewing, lip sticking, adulating male film stars, Lambeth Walking, Sunday excursions, the insipid inanities of wise cracking, and drift, must be blue heavens." The outburst might have

been taken direct from the works of Aldous Huxley, and when we find the mass man censured for not appreciating "the difficult idiom of Gerald Manley Hopkins" Mr. Hilton has made his self-indictment as a highbrow complete.

Of course he is a highbrow. Nobody but a highbrow could have written such a sensitive, sympathetic and completely non-boring book, a book which enables one to see more interest in the English scene—yes, and more beauty too, more scope for one's sympathy and more occasion for one's passionate indignation than one ever saw before. The fact that Mr. Hilton is at war with himself, that on one page he is proclaiming that "life without a modicum of beauty is impossible" and on the next pointing out that butter is more important than daffodils and that you cannot admire the latter while you lack the former, only adds to the interest of his work. For clearly he is caught on the horns of a dilemma. He wants people to be better off and to have more leisure in order that . . . in order apparently that they may spend their money and use their leisure in the pursuits and tastes of Brave New World; and he hates Brave New World like the devil.

C. E. M. JOAD

PRINCIPIA SOCIOLOGICA

Man and Society in An Age of Reconstruction. By KARL MANNHEIM. *Kegan Paul.* 16s. 6d.

Professor Mannheim's book is almost as difficult a work to review as it is to read. First the reviewer has much too much to say about it; secondly he is in an almost impossible quandary, for it is a book which one is certain either to overpraise or underpraise or one must appear to take back with the right hand everything which one gives with the left. Professor Mannheim is a deep, an acute, and an original thinker in the realm of human society and the science of sociology. But his apparatus of thought and exposition is cumbrous, long-winded, pedantic, and scientific in the worst sense. You are forced to dig out the important and original truths which he has to tell us from under a verbal superstructure which, if it were not for the transparent honesty of the writer, one would imagine had been invented for the express purpose of obscuring them from us. A single example will show what is meant. Professor Mannheim writes:

> This leads us to the working hypothesis that the quantum of mental energy needed to produce the habits and outlook of a society remains constant and that only the forms of expression change. In this sense we can speak of a transformation (metamorphosis) of this energy.

No one could understand from these two sentences what Professor Mannheim is trying to say, because it is covered up in a pseudo-scientific phraseology. When you have dug down under it, you discover a comparatively simple statement which could have been clearly expressed in ordinary human language. There is no point in or reason for this kind of sociological abracadabra. In metaphysics, physics, higher mathematics, economics, and theology, the facts examined and expounded may be so complicated or so abstract that they have to be translated into a technical language which the ordinary intelligent man cannot understand. But there is no reason to believe that this is the case with sociology. Professor Mannheim's book indeed gives us every reason for disbelieving it, for there is nothing which he says in it which one could not translate into ordinary plain language which the ordinary intelligent man could understand.

The reviewer cannot do the translation, but he can give one or two of the important and original truths which the author has discovered and concealed. For instance, he maintains that the sociologist will not really be able to understand and explain what is happening in human society to-day, unless he regards it as a whole and not split up into separate sections answering to the academic divisions of the social sciences. The separation of politics, economics, and psychology is for the sociologist no longer possible if he is to analyse the most important factors operating in contemporary society and then by a synthesis "explain" the social changes caused by them. It is doubtful whether this method is quite as new or original as Professor Mannheim maintains or whether the best man to use it is the kind of scientific specialist to whom alone he would entrust it. But the real value of his book is in its attempt to apply the method to the social crisis which in the last fifty years has become more and more threatening to what we thought was civilisation. He shows that the causes of the crisis are to be found in the inevitable passage from the *laissez-faire*, liberal, semi-democratic, individualist society to a society economically highly developed and rationalised and politically an organised mass democracy. In this new society the vital necessity is long-term and large-scale planning which is incompatible with the conception of nineteenth-century liberal and individualist freedom. Hence the economic, political, psychological, and international conflict which is racking Europe.

Professor Mannheim sums up his diagnosis in three hypotheses; "1. That most of the symptoms of our time are due to the transition from *laissez-faire* to a planned society. 2. That the transition from a democracy of the few to a mass society explains another set of changes. 3. That the changes in social technique account for yet a third group of changes, which has profoundly modified our social life." The totalitarian states have tried to resolve the conflict by establishing an autocracy which subjects every sphere of life, economic, political, and psychological to "planning." The most interesting part of Professor Mannheim's book is that in which he considers whether this solution is inevitable or whether it is not possible to combine freedom with planning. He himself believes that it is and he sketches the possible lines of a new "separation of powers" in a new society.

LEONARD WOOLF.

DETECTION

The Case of the Rolling Bones. By ERLE STANLEY GARDNER. *Cassell.* 8s.
Snow White Murder. By LESLIE FORD. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
The Broken Face Murders. By THE TEILHETS. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
Golden Ashes. By FREEMAN WILLS CROFTS. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 8s. 3d.
The Problem of the Wire Cage. By JOHN DICKSON CARR. *Hamish Hamilton.* 7s. 6d.
Brazen Tongue. By GLADYS MITCHELL. *Michael Joseph.* 8s.
The Crying Sisters. By MABEL SEELEY. *Collins.* 8s. 6d.
The Lady is Afraid. By GEORGE HARMON COXE. *Heinemann.* 8s.

There is nothing outstanding in this month's detection, and a singular dearth of fast American packets of rye, women and wallops for the dope addicts.

Erle Stanley Gardner produces another Perry Mason case from his stereotype: *The Case of the Rolling Bones* is neither better nor worse than any of its predecessors. The rolling bones (just a couple of loaded dice) have nothing to do with the plot, which hinges round the murder of a blackmailer. No attention whatever need be paid to the subsidiary plot concerning the identity of the blackmailer. It is the inveterate habit of Mr. Gardner to flap round your head

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an irrelevance to prevent the mind focusing on the problem at issue. And in this case he flaps so hard I doubt if the blackmailer knew himself who he really was. The court scenes, with Mason bamboozling the judge, the D.A., and his own clients, are better than ever. The murder technique is an ingenious trick, rather far-fetched but perfectly fair.

Miss Leslie Ford is always lavish with her feminine emotions; and in *Snow White Murder* she spreads them thick over a plot where the heart is infinitely more important than the head. In Old Virginia a beautiful, heartless exploitress of her own charms gets what's coming to her for being so disagreeable to another tender-hearted, loyal little trump of a girl. Miss Ford knows exactly what she's doing; she harps on the strings of passion and deprecates any insistence on the more sordid, material details of a murder investigation. Her detective, Colonel Primrose, flits rather uneasily in and out of this welter of love and hate on his prosaic task. As for the criminal, identification becomes easy in this sort of detection, since your choice is reduced to characters whose moral status debars them from much sympathy.

If the Teilhets were not determined to insist that their Baron Von Kaz is a gentleman in manners in spite of his inferior ethics, they would be writing tough thrillers for him. But although there is plenty of action in *The Broken Face Murders*, a certain glutinous quality about the Baron slows up the proceedings; his talents are underlined, his personal habits stressed, and his green umbrella brought into triumphant play. I am never happy about that green umbrella. With no amount of practice or dexterity will a sword-cudgel-boomerang make an efficient counter to a revolver full of bullets; and that is what the Baron invariably has to face. The Broken Face interrupts the Baron's honeymoon with Caryl (see the previous Kaz adventure) because the landlord of the happy couple mentions it cryptically just before a steel spike penetrates his brain; and the Baron is obliged to solve this verbal mystery before settling down to matrimonial bliss. Among the assorted crooks of California he has a lively and painful time doing so; and in a villainous and fantastic setting the particular villain he is after finds it easy to lurk concealed till the last chapter.

The problem in *Golden Ashes* is not to discover the criminal but to guess how Mr. Wills Crofts can arrange for someone to be murdered in Paris by someone who never leaves England. Of course that is just the painstaking kind of alibi-busting to suit Inspector French. It is one of the neatest jobs the Inspector has handled for several years; and, though never exciting, the story winds up with an eminently satisfying solution.

The latest Dickson Carr is rather disappointing. When we find a man strangled in the centre of a wire-enclosed hard tennis court with only the wrong person's footprints leading to the body, our appetite is whetted for one of Carr's miraculous juggling feats. Is it done from an autogyro? Or by an acrobat walking the tennis net like a tight-rope? Or by a gigantic fishing rod? None of these: Mr. Carr prefers his own method. But apart from the riddle in mechanics *The Problem of the Wire Cage* holds nothing of interest, and the reader has to plough through acres of padding before reaching Dr. Fell's simple demonstration of the answer.

That fantastic old lizard, Mrs. Bradley, has a wonderful slither round the ranks of small-town A.R.P. in *Brazen Tongue;* she is thoroughly at home in the black-out of all common sense. When the threads of our credulity are aching from the strain put upon them, Miss Mitchell produces a well-disguised culprit for her triple crime, and confidently adduces a motive, from which heaven defend us.

Miss Seeley composes in a minor key on the same theme as Leslie Ford—the titillation of feminine sensibility in the presence of untoward events. A girl librarian from a small Middle West city becomes involved in some sinister doings at the holiday camp on the shores of Crying Sisters Lake. Admirers of Mrs. Eberhart will like *The Crying Sisters* and be grateful to Miss Seeley for keeping out of her heroine's voice that sub-hysterical note we have learned to dread.

The Lady is Afraid is fast and exciting, but Chauncy Hale, Mr. Coxe's new detective, is not quite in the tough guy tradition—too considerate to women for one thing. The dramatic *dénouement*, however, will give many readers a surprise and most of them a thrill. Mr. Coxe is at his best at the moment when the case breaks.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

TWO AMERICAN HUMORISTS

My Old Man. By DAMON RUNYON. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.

Small Beer. By LUDWIG BEMELMANS. *Lane.* 7s. 6d.

If humour is reckoned by the number of laughs to a page, then Runyon comes out high. Better than anyone else to-day, he meets the demand, the ever-shifting demand, for "something really funny." He starts a tale like the little ball released in an automatic machine; down it saunters, zig-zagging among lighthouses, and at every bump, hard or soft, the lights flash on with unvarying brilliance. Most of us possess the mechanism which can be lit up in this way, coolly, irrelevantly, one might almost say, and grateful indeed we are to the writer who starts the ball rolling. No sort of reading is more instantly satisfactory or more effortlessly engaged in. The eye slides over paragraphs easy as water; neither heart nor mind is engaged except idly, as an indulgent spectator. Perhaps at the moment you do not wish to subject yourself to these painless thrills of the humorist; but if you do, if you like having your diaphragm pleasurably tapped, get Runyon's *My Old Man*. Measured by laughs, it may not quite come up to *More Than Somewhat* or *Take It Easy*; but it is funny enough, and the opinions of the Old Man on almost any subject are as engagingly blunt as their expression is sly.

> My old man said the only difference between him and a lot of distinguished citizens of the world in the matter of windiness was that he had wasted his vocal breezes on desert air instead of wafting them into the ears of voters or readers.

Many sentences begin with "My old man said"—this is the new Runyon formula—and his comment ranges from politics and women to snobs, suicide, preachers, gossip, and old age. He is worth quoting on any of these subjects; anecdote and reminiscence generally lead up to a saying as sharp and saturated as a pickled walnut. Here he is on female beauty:

> My old man said he had seen pictures of the Venus de Milo, and if that was supposed to be the statue of a beautiful and perfect woman he must be cock-eyed. He said he thought she was too thick in spots. Still, he said, he knew men right there in our own home town who did not think a woman was beautiful unless she was beef to the heels.

On snobbery:

> My old man said you might read stories in the papers every day over quite a period about the fight some prominent man or woman was making for life against illness, and about how, eventually, they won out, but he said you never read about some doctor's part in that battle.

This old man, in fact—who appears in the illustrations with goatee beard, thick black eyebrows and scattered locks under a wide awake hat—had a nose for the vanities and inanities of human nature. He disapproved of the habit

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of whitewashing the dead, he considered men to be worse gossips than women, he preferred a spendthrift to a worthy hoarder. In his home town of Pueblo, where his comments often got him into trouble, he must have enjoyed a strange reputation for anarchy and good sense. We are delighted with every moment of his talk, yet, in the end, he remains a "character," a megaphone, and not a real old man at all. Was Mr. Runyon hoping to set up a figure beside Clarence Day's delectable Father? Perhaps; but the weird conviction, the sense of intimacy, are lacking.

We tend to lump all modern American humorists together, but there are two camps, miles apart. Anita Loos, Runyon and their followers are in one; in the second, there is Thurber, who has introduced something quite new into literature by making humour autobiographical. No longer the spectacle of a man running after his hat but the horrifying sensation of the man running is now the theme. Thurber, of course, is in a class by himself. He has, so far as I know, no imitators. At times in the past Mr. Ludwig Bemelmans has succeeded in giving us the same eerie sheep-like thrill—in *Life Class*, especially, which is a remarkable fragment of autobiography. The publisher of *Small Beer* describes his new book as a continuation of his *apologia pro vita sua*; but it is hardly that. A note of expensive cosmopolitanism is brilliantly sustained in these stories and sketches; the detail dazzles, and begins to pall. However, there are one or two stories here that could hardly be done better. In "My English Suit in Paris," Mr. Bemelmans records the magical effect of appearing in the Place de l'Opèra wearing an obviously expensive suit instead of his usual shabby one; touts sprang out from every corner whispering an address or flickering a grubby pack of photographs; when he sat in the Tuileries or on a café terrace devious strangers would compliment him on the material of his suit and then proceed to business. "Putzi" and "The Story of a Dog" are even funnier and more horrifying; war and Nazi tyranny intrude into this humorist's world without his batting an eyelid. Like Thurber, he has established the connection between nightmare and laughter, and that, in the world as it is to-day, is an achievement we may well envy him. G. W. STONIER

JUSTICE IN PRACTICE

The Machinery of Justice in England. By R. M. JACKSON. *Cambridge University Press.* 16*s.*

It is to be hoped that this book will be widely read. The ground covered in its 329 pages is immense, and the work has been well done. The author describes clearly not only how our legal system is intended to operate but how it actually works. In Victorian times the average citizen went through life without coming in conscious contact with the law. Now it is almost impossible to avoid such contact, and even conflict with the law is an everyday occurrence.

Members of Parliament especially should read this book. They would then have a better understanding of the probable result of the laws they pass. They would, for instance, see how it is that Workmen's Compensation Acts so often fail to have the effect intended, and why the use of the word "may" instead of "shall" in Section 2 of the Poor Prisoners Defence Act, 1930, has made the Act practically useless so far as the Summary Courts are concerned. The latter point was specifically raised by Mr. J. J. McShane, then Labour Member for Walsall, on the Committee stage of the Bill, so he may rank among the prophets. It might also be realised that some of our High Court judges express themselves the more positively the less they know about the subject under discussion.

It is inevitable that in a description of the composition and working of so many kinds of courts and tribunals some errors of detail should occur. For instance, summary courts cannot deal with the transfer of liquor licences, although they can grant temporary authority to carry on business until the next transfer sessions, and quarter sessions do not grant, but confirm, new licences. (Page 90.) There are also some statements which may be doubted. For example, it is said that "it often happens that a motorist is acquitted of criminal charges arising out of his driving while a civil court holds that he drove negligently and so must compensate the injured plaintiff." (Page 22.) Actually, magistrates are usually very ready to convict a motorist, while in a civil (unlike a criminal) court, the defence of contributory negligence is available. The few minor slips which are to be found are, however, of no importance.

The author has the gift of driving home in a sentence the point of many pages. Two quotations, taken at random, illustrate this. "An English criminal trial, properly conducted, is one of the best products of our law, provided you walk out of court before the sentence is given." And with regard to our summary courts, "the best cure for complacency about magistrates is to appear before them." But he does not deal only with what are commonly called courts of justice. The difference, in theory and practice, between courts of law and the numerous special tribunals that now exist is clearly shown. This is especially important now, when there is an increasing tendency towards the creation of these tribunals. Incidentally, Mr. Jackson seems unaware of the great work for penal reform done by the Howard League.

A valuable section is that dealing with juries. In spite of the number of citizens who have served on juries and the alleged vital importance of trial by jury as the foundation of our constitution, very few people know what the jury system really is. The author is, perhaps, not quite fair to juries in his comments on their usefulness as a safeguard against oppression. Their actual verdicts in the eighteenth century were no doubt erratic, but the necessity of bringing an accused person before a jury was a real safeguard.

In addition, this book deals tactfully, but effectively, with the judicial theory that litigants exist for the benefit of judges, and that the waste of business-men's time for two or three days should never be allowed to weigh against the possibility that a judge might find himself unoccupied for half an hour. The statement by the Lord Chief Justice in 1936 that "His Majesty's Judges are satisfied with the almost universal admiration in which they are held," is quoted. Perhaps, however, the Lord Chief Justice used the word admiration in its older sense. SOLICITOR

Mozart et ses Concertos pour Piano. By C. M. GIRDLESTONE. 2 vols. *Fischbacher.*

Mozart's Piano Concertos form a musical *corpus* unique in their kind, for no other composer has in this form so embodied all the phases of his spiritual and technical development, as Beethoven did in his string quartets or Sibelius in his symphonies. These dazzling works, with their profound gaiety, their lyrical sadness, their inexhaustible wealth of invention, their distinguished virtuosity and absolute technical mastery of medium, conceal a *Journal Intime* whose secret mazes it is fascinating to explore under the expert guidance of Mr. Girdlestone. His work is of the kind usually described as monumental, for the technical analysis of each concerto is as detailed as possible and the scholarship displayed of a very high order; yet the book is the very reverse of dry or heavy: the musical examples essential to the proper following of an analysis are copious and clearly printed, the expositions lively

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and distinguished by an infectious enthusiasm. Such a book is most opportune, for while on the one hand, owing to the enlightened policy of the gramophone companies, almost all the later concertos of Mozart have been recorded in their entirety, on the other the conventional critical attitude of disdain for the form, resulting from its abuse by virtuosi in the latter half of the nineteenth century, is gradually being overcome by a fuller understanding of its true nature. For the concerto is essentially a dramatic performance—a kind of wordless opera. As Mr. Girdlestone puts it: "*L'essence du genre consiste dans la lutte qui se livre entre l'orchestre, d'une part, et l'instrument . . . de l'autre.*" It is a struggle, moreover, which ends in reconciliation; hence the admirable catharsis with which it provides the listener.

The actual structure which Mozart evolved for the concerto fixed the form for nearly a century: an opening *allegro* in sonata form, an *andante* (generally a nocturne, sometimes a set of variations), and a final *rondo*. But it is worth noticing that some of the later concertos (e.g. the Rondo of the Concerto in E flat, K. 482) take liberties with the structure that show the composer feeling out towards the free fantasia which was eventually to be exploited in its most extravagant form by Liszt. As Mr. Girdlestone points out, the development section of the first movements tends more and more to take the form of a thematic fantasia. Careful listening is needed to distinguish this fact: we are all too apt to take such bridge passages as mere conventional writing—a page or two of tonic-dominant semiquavers during which we may rest our ears before attending to the recapitulation. In the concertos of a century later we may find such writing positively unpleasant, because we are not so inclined to take, say, Brahms's conventions for granted as we are Mozart's. But the whole attitude is the result of a misconception which it is partly the object of books like this to disperse. It is impossible, within the limits of a shorter notice, to do justice to all the qualities of this one; but amateurs of books on music can be reassured on one important point: Mr. Girdlestone nowhere resorts to the woolliness or the useless imagery of the typical writer of programme notes.

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The work of this vital Service must go on in War as well as in Peace.

In time of War it may be more difficult for you to contribute to the Life-Boat Service, but remember that these heroic men are working now in circumstances of far greater difficulty and danger.

Contributions, however small, are urgently required to maintain this great national Institution.

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NEW STATESMAN & NATION
10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1

Livy Vol. VI. (Books 23 and 24), translated by F. G. MOORE. **Nonnos, Dionysiaca** (2 vols. Books 1–15 and 16–35), translated by W. H. D. ROUSE, with Introduction by H. J. ROSE. Loeb Classics. *Heinemann.* Each volume, 10s., cloth; 12s. 6d., leather.

This batch of "Loebs" includes one well known and one little known author. The two books of Livy cover the years 212–216 B.C. and deal mainly with the doings of the Carthaginians in Italy after the battle of Cannae and with the victories and subsequent defeats of the Romans in Spain. Nonnos appears for the first time in an English translation, and we congratulate Dr. Rouse, as well as Professor Rose who contributes a very interesting mythological introduction. Nonnos was a curious product of Egypt in the fifth century A.D. His *Dionysiaca* is a vast collection of myths (not confined to Dionysus) in which the god appears as a thorough-paced scoundrel in many roles. It is written in epic hexameter and, though it ranks low as poetry, the versification will interest scholars with a taste for getting off the beaten track.

Who's Who in the Wars. Words by DUNCAN MILLER. Pictures by WALTER GOETZ. *Peter Davies.* 6s.

The words are clerihews, the pictures are not pictures but pen-drawings, the collaboration is a success. The Caudillo sits plumply on a fence, watching bombs fall:

What fun for Franco
and Co.
To turn their attention
To Non-Intervention.

The Führer in riding-breeches straddles a bunker, with Göring as caddy in medals and plus-fours.

If Adolf
Had been plus-two at golf
We might have stood a lot more
Before going to war.

Sir John Reith lies on a desk, tied up with a large ribbon bow:

The Ministry of Information
Ought to send a deputation
To lay a Reith
On the desk of Ian Hay Beith.

The drawings are always trenchant, and sometimes elegant, *The Land of Queen Wilhelmina*, for instance, and *Admiral Horthy*. A cricket-bat seems an odd Emblem for Mr. Eden, who is less hearty than arty, and Mme. Tabouis is ill-conceived. But look at Hore-Belisha, Gort, Churchill, Ribbentrop, and the non-Aryan Roosevelt. Altogether uncommonly good, and quite clean, fun.

Week-end Competitions

No. 542

Set by G. W. Stonier

The simplest way of testing a bad novel is to read its last paragraph; there, as a rule, the peculiar badness of the author reaches heights of unconscious parody. Nor are bad novelists the only defaulters in this respect. We offer the usual prizes for the best—or worst, should it be?—last paragraphs. These should be taken from actual novels, the authors and titles of which must be given; and the more august the source the better.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, July 5th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 540

Set by Thomas Smallbones

On the evening of June 10th, 1940, in the Elysian Fields, Shelley, Byron, Swinburne and Browning each presented Garibaldi with a poem. The usual prizes are offered for any one of these poems. None of the poets, not even Swinburne, had time to write more than twenty lines.

Report by Thomas Smallbones

Reports from the Elysian Fields seem to indicate that the widely advertised beneficence of the climate there is far from universal in its incidence. On Shelley, for instance, it appears to have had something like the same effect that Putney Heath used to have on Swinburne, producing the formula without the spirit, the form without the life. I discounted as rumour-mongering Charles Furbank's suggestion that "Shelley, ever adaptable, has naturally tended to become more metaphysical and less romantic, as is the fashion to-day in the wide literary circles in the Elysian Fields." Byron's falling-off may, it is true, be attributed less to the climate than to the alternative entertainments which the Fields offer; he has only the inclination, if we may trust K. K., for "recasting the most popular passages of a Former work" (a good entry, but disallowed on that account). Both Swinburne and Browning on the other hand find their surroundings tonic and are producing work as spirited and fiery as in their best period here: evidence of this comes through Allan Laing, Q. R., R. S. Jaffray and David Foreman. C. F. Rathbone's ingenious rhymes put him in the running, but I recommend that the first prize goes to W. Sterne for his excellent Swinburne, the second to J. C. B. Date for his Browning.

This high man, with a nation to unite,
Died (Omen absit!)
That low man sees France's back in the grim fight,
Sees it, and stabs it.
That low man crawls ignobly to Germany's side,
(Self-styled Il Duce).
This high man roused hope, ay and courage and pride
In each idler and moocher.
Know then, my friend, when you look on this jackdaw
Who acts so unprettily,
He who seeks plunder and gain through the back door,
He is not Italy. C. F. RATHBONE

FIRST PRIZE

In the depths of the sore-stricken night, in the years
of the storm wind and foam
As a dawn-bird that sang in the dark was the voice
of republican Rome,
And the night-breathing carrion that heard, and the
foul things that fester by day
Were brushed by her wings as she rose, and they
stirred in their sleep as they lay,
Till thy sunbright face, O Italia, whose eyes strike
tyrannies dead,
Shone on them, and woke them, and slew, and the
old ghosts trembled and fled.
But the years have enslaved and enthralled thee, thy
soul grows weary with time,
And tyrant with tyrant has spoken, and crime has
stood brother to crime,
And a beast has fed full on thy flesh, and a black
worm gnawed at thy heart,
Thou, chief high-priestess of freedom, thou set for
her service apart.
Thou art more than these, O Italia; they shall
perish, but thou shalt abide,
And life shall return, and spring-tide, the bridegroom
twin-born with the bride,
And we that are fain of thee, love thee, shall watch
till thou wakest from sleep,
And the hearts of the rulers shall fail, and the hands
of the sowers shall reap. W. STERNE

SECOND PRIZE

So she is false, my lovely Italy;
But let's not weep for that. In vain men sigh
When pretty women act unprettily.
We'd hoped that she was different, you and I,
Our Italy, it's true. We knew her when
No crafty, bullying Metternich could kill
Her Spirit. Now, though—She was lovely then!
Those little white towns scrambling up the hill
(Remember yet how white, how blue that sky?)
That caught a poet's heart. Now they are—No!
No, not forgotten. Only fools would try
To numb the once-felt rapture—Saddened, though,
But not despairing. For, as I maintain,
Though now the liberty you fought for dies
You'll not be forgotten. That is plain.
You and your lads with freedom-flashing eyes
And if she—that dear Italy—prove base,
Yours still the honour; hers—and *his*—the shame.
I, foolish scribbler, half-hope, I confess
That she will yet recapture her fair name.
J. C. B. DATE

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

THE NEW LOAN AND THE OLD GANG—THE SLUMP IN EQUITIES—MINIMUM PRICES AND THE INLAND REVENUE

THE new issue of 2½ Per Cent. National War Bonds, 1945/47 reveals the old financial gang at work. It is an issue designed primarily for the joint stock banks. (I am told that the discount houses will not subscribe because they are already overloaded with the Conversion 2 Per Cent. bonds.) It is not an issue for the small investor—subscriptions being required in multiples of £100—and even if it were the small investor would prefer to put his savings in the Post Office Savings Bank or in National Savings certificates or buy 3 Per Cent. Defence Bonds in units of £5, withdrawable in cash on six months' notice. As the new issue of 2½ per cent. Bonds is merely a banking issue it means that the Government is borrowing from the banks at 2½ per cent. cheaply on Treasury Bills. In other words, it means inflation at 2½ per cent. instead of 1 per cent. I am therefore justified in pointing to the hidden hand of the old financial gang. Of course, I am not suggesting that subscriptions will not be received from any other quarter. The insurance companies are being bullied into subscribing and the Prudential, which is always anxious to justify its national existence, has set the pace by applying for £20,000,000. But there is danger in forcing the insurance companies to take an issue which for them is not a bread-and-butter investment, for it restricts their normal function in the security markets. Last week, for example, the serious slump in security values which occurred on the Stock Exchange, which, incidentally, has deprived the Inland Revenue of millions in estate duties, would never have occurred if the insurance companies had not been asked by the Bank of England, through the British Insurance Association, to hold up all investment of cash balances pending the issue of a new Government loan. It is the job of the institutional investors to buy the securities which executors and other private holders have to realise on the Stock Exchange in order to meet the tax demands of the Government. It is not their function to subscribe to a 2½ per cent. Bond issue designed for the banks. And, above all, it is not for the Treasury to hand out 2½ per cent. plums to the joint stock banks when 1 per cent. plums would be sufficient. The national larder is being robbed by these financial operations and the sooner the old order responsible for them is made to realise that this will not be tolerated in the new scheme of things the better.

* * *

Last week I gave a table revealing the havoc wrought in the home railway market through the failure of the industrial investors to do their duty. Here is another showing the devastating slump in the leading equity shares in the past month:

	Price a Month ago	Price June 27	% Fall	Last Divd. %	Gross Divd. Yield %
Imp. Tobacco ...	5 ⅛	3½	30	23 net	10.5
Imp. Chemical £1 ...	30/-	20/-	30	8	8.0
Tube £1 ...	92/-	60/-	35	23.75	7.9
Rolls-Royce £1 ...	4 ⅛	2 ⅝	42	20*	8.0
Vickers 10s.	16/3	19/6	42	10	10.5

*Interim 5%: Final estimated 15%.

This is a sorry valuation of the industrial earning power of the nation.

Does this huge margin of yield over and above the gilt edged rate of interest measure the public apprehension of bombs or invasion? Hardly. It indicates a technical market collapse which if continued will endanger the stability of the gilt-edged market.

* * *

My suggestion that the minimum price system should be extended to pivotal stocks in the fixed-interest and equity markets is being discussed in the City, but it is typical of the old order that Stock Exchange opinion should be opposed to any innovations. "Most market men," to quote from a financial daily, "hold that anything tending to further restriction of business should be avoided." Naturally jobbers would oppose anything which tended to prevent the large profits which they are now making by quoting wider and wider margins in these demoralised markets, but it is disingenuous for them to argue that minimum prices are impossible outside the gilt-edged market because interest or dividend rates may be cut. Minimum prices for equity stocks would, of course, have to be revised from time to time if dividend rates were altered—take the case of Shell Transport which has just passed its final dividend—but directors of large companies would certainly co-operate with the Stock Exchange by estimating conservatively future dividends for the next six months which would enable provisional minimum prices to be established. I would apply minimum prices to all the leading equity shares which are usually found in a deceased account and I would follow this up with the provision that executors should be allowed to hand over these securities to the Treasury in payment of death duties at the minimum prices fixed. The Government could either borrow against these securities or sell them at the minimum prices or above as and when market conditions allowed on the Stock Exchange. There is no doubt that the establishing of minimum prices for pivotal securities would restore confidence to the investor and would make for much greater stability in security values. The new order demands new financial methods. If the present demoralisation is allowed to continue. The Inland Revenue will never be able to collect its death duties from deceased estates.

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CORNWALL. To let, holidays or period, furnished cottages overlooking sea between St. Ives and Lands End. Grand spot. Bathing coves. Moorland walks. Terms and photos. MRS. SEVIER, The Bungalow, Pendeen.

WOODY BAY HOTEL, nr. Lynton. Facing sea; unsurpassingly beautiful scenery and bathing. From 3½ gns.

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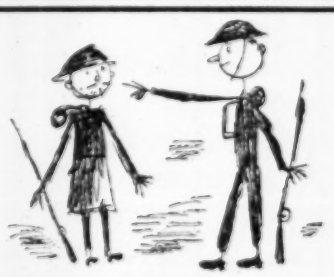

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At shaving was frightfully sleaux,
Till a Tommy said "If
You start shaving with JIF
You'll do it much quicker, you neaux."

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, Bayswater, W.2. Morning service only. June 30th, at 11 a.m., STANTON COIT: "WHAT OUGHT TO BE."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. Sunday, June 30th, at 11 a.m., PROF. H. LEVY, D.Sc.: "THE DESTINY OF MAN." Admission free.

WHAT WILL RUSSIA DO? All questions answered by IVOR MONTAGU, REG. BISHOP and W. J. R. SQUANCE at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Friday, June 28th, 7.30. Russian goods and new pamphlets on sale. Tickets 6*d.* at doors or from RUSSIA TO-DAY SOCIETY, 8 Red Lion Square, W.C.1.

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL

INFORMATION given without fee on BOARDING SCHOOLS—CICELY C. WRIGHT, 4 York Road, Headington, Oxford.

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Application forms, returnable not later than 8th July, 1940, may be obtained from:

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Education Office,
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Reading.

on receipt of a stamped addressed foolscap envelope.

Reading.
June, 1940.

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